

10

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW IF YOU
THINK YOU ARE READY FOR A

or **JOB** change
CAREER



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Kitty offers one-on-one coaching, career coaching and job search advice, and she provides workshops on stress management for teachers and busy professionals who are suffering from the painful effects of job burnout. She also enjoys working with mid-career professionals who find themselves at a career crossroads. She assists in the job search process and offers advice on how to manage a profound career transition or transformation which can often feel daunting at best.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to all teachers everywhere who go to work every day hoping to make some child's life better.

It is also dedicated to those individuals who have hit the point of burnout and need to know that there is hope for them to find something else that can be just as fulfilling and perhaps a lot more fun.

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Introduction

A 2013 Gallup Poll revealed that [70% of the workforce described themselves as disengaged in their work.](#)



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More recently I read that internationally, [only 13% of respondents to a survey have indicated that they enjoy their jobs,](#) which means that 87% of the respondents *don't*. *Yikes!*

I heard the first statistic right around the time I was in the midst of my own career transition, and I knew I did not want to join the ranks of the 70% of unhappy American workers. I also do not want to be among the 87% who don't enjoy themselves at work.



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As a result of hearing that first statistic right after it came out in 2013, I began my career transition, which actually became more of a transformation. I went from identifying myself as a teacher and librarian and the Past President of the Virginia Education Association (2008-12) to Certified Life Coach, Certified Stress Management Coach, Certified Holistic Life Coach, Licensed Minister, and Experienced Career Transition and Job Search Coach, along with being a published author and a professional speaker. In the course of my new mission, which I now undertake each new day, I help people who want to reinvent or retool

themselves for work that will be more satisfying for *them*. I don't want anyone to be miserable in their jobs or careers.

Work should not be a chore! Since you spend most of your waking hours at work, don't you want it to be soul satisfying instead of soul *sucking*? Shouldn't your work be in alignment with your strengths, skills, aptitudes and natural talents? Don't you want to feel like your work is making a difference in your life and in the lives of those with whom you work?

Of course you do!

Unfortunately, for many people, looking for new work or changing jobs or careers feels daunting, so instead of being proactive and learning how to do it properly, most people **stay stuck** right where they are, hating their jobs and "wishing" things were different.

This is especially true for my teacher clients, unfortunately. They feel symptoms of job burnout long before they are able to recognize it for what it is. Even if they truly love their students, and most of them still do, there are so many other aspects to the job that they *don't* love—and even hate. The laundry list of complaints I hear include paperwork that seems to be endless and meaningless; unfair evaluation systems; administrators who are difficult or inept (or both); a general lack of respect for the profession which has begun to pervade our entire society; and a lack of mobility or real advancement in pay.

Teachers are not the only ones who can suffer from job burnout, however. I also work with a lot of mid-career professionals who are bored or burnt out, but they are similarly stuck or paralyzed, accounting, I suspect, for at least some of the 70% of Americans who report feeling "disengaged" in their jobs.

People need to look for work for other reasons besides burnout, too. Sometimes jobs just disappear. Companies close down. Departments merge. People move and need to find new jobs because their spouse's job necessitated a move to a new city. **Unless you have been looking for work in the last 5-7 years, chances are you don't have a clue as to what you need to do to even *begin* a serious job search. *You may not know where to turn.***



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Here are 10 things I believe you need to know if you think you are ready for a job change or a career transition:

1. You need to have focus or a sense of clarity around what it is you *really* want to do before you can even *start* your job search unless you want to waste a lot of time, money, and energy spinning your wheels. Most people I meet initially don't have any focus or any clarity around what they want to do next. They look at me blankly when I ask them what they want to do in their next job or career. They haven't given it much thought, frankly. They know what they *don't* want to do, but deciding on a new course of action has them stymied and feeling stuck. **If you want to make a change, it is time to think about it, *focus* on it and start moving in that direction with small but daily action steps.**



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2. Your résumé needs to be changed with every job application so that it mirrors the job description. The days of having one résumé and considering it “one and done” are over. Don’t make the mistake, either, of turning your résumé over to some “expert” résumé writer. You will likely regret it if you do. I know I do. I often tell the story of how I hired someone to write my résumé for me because writing it myself seemed too challenging. I wasted \$395 on a résumé I have never ever used. I might as well have set that \$395 on fire or flushed it down the toilet for all the good it did me. To this day, I regret feeling bullied into buying something I didn’t need because I didn’t know any better.

There are several résumé “do’s” and “do not’s” that you should always keep in mind when writing your résumé. Here are just a few:

- ✓ Do highlight your most relevant experience as it pertains to the job for which you are applying. *Target a specific position and tailor your résumé to fit it.*
- ✓ Do include relevant and **transferable skills**, even if you don't have the specified experience that is included in the job description.
- ✓ Do use **keywords** from the job description (but be careful and don't copy the wording exactly).
- ✓ Do use **data** as much as you can, including percentages, numbers, statistics, etc.
- ✓ Do **not** include anything that might be considered confidential.
- ✓ Do not include obvious skills.
- ✓ Do not include self-promotional adjectives, i.e., "hard-working," "driven," "successful," "people person," "passionate about..." (Let other people say wonderful things about you. In your résumé, stick to the facts...only *verifiable* facts.) Don’t embellish.



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4. Make sure your **résumé and your cover letter** are perfect in **every respect**. Errors in formatting, spelling, punctuation-- even the spacing--will cause your résumé to get ditched. You are competing against dozens, if not hundreds, of other people for the same job opening. If you have been careless enough to send a résumé or cover letter with an error of any sort, you are probably going land in the “No” pile. It isn’t personal. **There are just too many other applications that don’t contain those errors.** Get a good proofreader to read over everything before you hit “send” or put a stamp on anything. This is not a time that you can afford to make any careless errors.



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5. Know and understand the **Applicant Tracking System (ATS)**. It can be your enemy if you don’t understand its purpose in sorting and managing applications. The ATS is designed to manage and sort *every* application that comes through the electronic portal of a company or organization. Not understanding how the ATS works can mean the difference between a human being ever seeing your application and it getting lost in the “black hole” of the system, never to be seen. You may never get as much as a “thank you” for your application because it got lost in the ATS.



Photo from JobScience.com

6. Be aware of your **personal and professional brand**. How do you show up for networking events or interviews? Are you familiar with [Tom Peter's concept of you are your own brand?](#) If not, you should get familiar with it because it may make the difference between your being considered for a particular job or not.

How do you show up for networking events, for example? Do you always dress one step above the job for which you want to apply, or do you approach networking with overly casual attire?

Don't forget that you cannot make a good impression after you have already made a poor one, and **first impressions are everything at networking events**. Take pride in your appearance. Practice your handshake. Be aware of good eye contact with those you meet. Practice your "elevator pitch," but more importantly, show an interest in those you meet. **Your personal brand is about how you make the other people around you feel.** Don't forget that.



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7. Be aware of your **social media/online brand**. When did you last update your LinkedIn profile for example? **Do you even have a LinkedIn profile?** If not, you need to change that ASAP.

Here are some major considerations when constructing your LinkedIn profile:

- ✓ What kind of photo do you have as your headshot?
- ✓ What does your Headline say about you?
- ✓ Have you taken time to write a compelling Summary?
- ✓ What is the size of your network?
- ✓ Have you customized your LinkedIn profile?

These are all questions you need to be able to answer in the affirmative, and if you can't, you need to take a course or [watch my LinkedIn webinar](#) so you can get in on the power that is inherent in having a strong and fully optimized LinkedIn profile. If you would like a guide to the 14 elements every LinkedIn profile should include that I have had created just for the purpose of helping people fill out their LinkedIn profiles correctly, [it is available for only \\$7. Just click on the link to order it.](#)



LinkedIn
PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS CHECKLIST

Every LinkedIn Profile is unique because every individual provides unique information. Having said that, every LinkedIn Profile should include certain information. To do so puts your professional brand at risk. These are just the minimum requirements that every professional or business owner should include in their profile. Whether you are actively looking for a new job, or you would just be open to a possibility should it be offered to you by a recruiter or Human Resources Director looking for a responsible professional, your profile should be optimized to ensure your base is covered.

Learn 14 Elements Every LinkedIn Profile Should Include by Kitty Boitnott

- 1. Your Photo**
Is it "professional" looking? Does it make you look likeable, competent and influential?
- 2. Your Name**
How do you want people to find you? Are you going to be more readily found if you include a middle name or a maiden name or your current legal name? Do you need to include designations such as PMP, Ph.D., or MBA?
- 3. Your Headline**
This is the most valuable "real estate" on your entire profile. You should consider using keywords that express your areas of expertise or your specialty, not your job title! It should

John M. Doe
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358 connections

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8. Clean up your **other social media platforms** including **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.** Delete anything that you wouldn't want a future employer to see. Have you posted about your political leanings? That may not serve you well, so be aware. Do you have a lot of photos of yourself partying it up on the weekends? You may need to reconsider. It may not be fair, but Hiring Managers and future employers will check out your online social media footprint, and if they don't like what they see, they will leave you in the "no" pile while they keep looking.



Photo by Depositphotos.com

9. You will also need to learn to **network** effectively both in person and online. There is an art to networking, and most people don't understand that. This connects back to what your in-person brand may entail. Do you show up for in-person networking events to network with people in the room, or do you stay on your phone texting your best friend about how much you hate networking?

If you don't love networking, don't feel too bad. About half the people in the room are feeling just as miserable as you, even if they look like they are enjoying themselves. Find someone in the room who appears to be even more uncomfortable than you feel and strike up a conversation with them. They will be grateful for your overture, and who knows? You may create a real connection where you can help each other out in your job search efforts. It happens all the time.



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10. In addition to the mechanics and all the moving parts of your job search, you will need to adopt the **attitude** that you will continue in your search until you are successful. I won't kid you: **job-hunting can be a brutal proposition**, and few people ever enjoy the process. After all, it involves lots of getting out of your comfort zone and experiencing a lot of rejection. Who enjoys *that*?

The successful career switcher or job hunter is only successful by virtue of the fact that s/he didn't give up. [I have written articles about the importance of being persistent as well as patient in your job search.](#) I cannot stress that aspect of the search enough.



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So, the bottom line is that job-hunting is hard! It is not something you can do half-heartedly or with a wishful approach. **You have to know your own value, and you have to be willing to stand up for yourself in the face of rejection.**

At the end of the day, you may not want to do this on your own. Perhaps you could use someone to help guide you through the maze and help you overcome the many obstacles that are inevitably going to deter you in your efforts.

If you are ready to change your career and your life, let me help you figure out what you need to do in order to position yourself for the career you really want.

Don't settle for being part of the 70% of Americans who are not engaged in what they do.

Contact me at kittyboitnott@boitnottcoaching.com or call me at 804-404-5475, and let's get started. Don't suffer in silence one more moment. The only way you can possibly change your career (and change your life) is **if you take action right now.**

The fact is that **there is no Job Fairy** that is going to magically appear at your door to offer the escape you may want and need. You have to start by taking some sort of meaningful action on your own. **So email me or call me and learn how to get started.**

You *can* change your life for the better right now. You just need to make the decision to do it and then you have to take steps to start.

I can help you. If you doubt it, check out the testimonials on my [website](#) or the recommendations on my [LinkedIn](#) profile. Those are all comments from satisfied clients who were just like you before they took steps to change their individual situations. So what are you waiting for?

Kitty Boitnott, Your Career "Makeover" Coach

Read on to learn more about the nature of the job search process based on articles I have written over the years on the subjects of

4 Signs You Need to Change Careers

Changing jobs represents a unique set of challenges, but changing a career can feel like a daunting task depending on the level of education you may have invested in or the amount of experience you have racked up. In spite of those challenges, however, the time does come for some when the writing is on the wall. You realize you aren't happy anymore in the career of first choice, and it is time to assess what you might be able to do to transition into another line of work. Here are what I would offer are four distinct signs that you are not only ready to change careers, but you *need* to change before your health, or your primary relationships suffer anymore.

Related: [3 Things To Think About Before Changing Careers](#)

1. You find yourself dreading Monday mornings.

Sometime on Sunday night, you begin to dread going back to “that place” and working with “those people.” This is a classic symptom of job burnout and a sign that you need a change. If you experience this feeling on a regular basis...week after week for a month or more...it is time to take stock. You may need to start considering your alternatives. Life is too short for you to feel reluctant about going to work every Monday. You can only white-knuckle your way through the week so often before it starts to take a toll on your health and your family. The stress of forcing yourself to work in an environment you do not enjoy can make you sick—literally. It can also make you irritable and depressed which can ultimately impact your relationship with your spouse, your children, and your friends.

2. You feel stuck and unhappy because you don't see room for advancement or promotion.

Many people have settled for whatever work they could get while the economy was down, and as a result, too many people have been chronically under-employed for too long. If you have been in a dead

end job where you can't see a space for yourself regarding a promotion or a significant advancement that includes additional responsibility and/or more pay, you may need to take stock of your alternatives as the economy slowly but surely improves. Stagnation isn't good for your psyche, and most people want to experience some growth on the job. Feeling that there is no route to more responsibility or more financial compensation can seriously impact your overall job satisfaction and may make you eager to look for alternatives now that the economy is improving.

3. You feel that you have no control over your work or your projects.

If all of the major decisions are made for you even when you may know best how to handle a particular situation, you may be feeling stifled. You will tire of being second-guessed, perhaps by people who have less experience or education than you, and you will soon be ready to make a change. Most of us enjoy our work when we feel that we have some sense of control or efficacy in the workplace. You want and deserve to be given some freedom as you work on your assigned projects or duties, and you would appreciate being given some latitude in making day-to-day decisions. If you are being micro-managed, it may be time to make a change.

4. You feel discouraged and put down by your boss or co-workers.

Given that you spend a third of your waking hours on the job, it makes sense that you would want to work with people who show appreciation for your work. If you only get rebuffs and put downs, it can take away from all enjoyment that you might otherwise experience. One of our basic psychological needs as humans is for a feeling of belonging and feeling appreciated. These feelings cannot be experienced in an atmosphere where your superiors are determined to belittle you or make light of your

efforts. If you work with superiors or co-workers who don't appreciate your contributions, it is definitely time to consider a change.

Let's face it...we are all living longer, and we are experiencing increased good health and vitality because of the improvements made in our lives as a part of modern society. As a result, it is quite possible that we will experience not only more than one job in our lifetime but that we will experience more than one full career. In my case, for example, I spent the first three decades of my professional life as a teacher and elementary school librarian. I loved that job, but the time came for me to move on and in spite of my age, I decided to try my hand at something else. Over the course of the last three years, since I turned 60, I have retooled and reinvented myself completely. I still use my education (two Master's degrees and a Ph.D.), and I still use my experience as a teacher, mentor, and trainer, but I also now get to coach, advise, and counsel those who are ready to make a change of their own in their professional lives. I am positive proof that it is never too late to make a change. If you are experiencing any one or a combination of the signs above, you may want to take a look at the possibility, at least, of changing careers and changing your life.

This article is online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/change-careers-signs/>.

5 Career Questions to Ask Yourself Daily

You spend at least a third of your 24-hour day working, so it would be to your benefit to make sure you are working in a job or career that you enjoy, don't you think? A few years ago, a Gallup Poll revealed that 70% of Americans either hated their jobs or were disengaged in them which means they are bored or are just going through the motions. I don't know about you, but that doesn't seem like a great way to live.

Related: [15 Questions To Ask Before Making A Career Change](#)

I have been lucky in my life. I sort of fell into my first career, and it turned out to be a perfect fit for me in many ways. Later, when I had an opportunity to begin my new career as a coach, I got to spend some time thinking about what it was I wanted to do and how I wanted to make it work.

When I am coaching my clients who find themselves at a career crossroads, I ask them to consider some basic questions. They are the only ones who can answer these questions, but they need to think about them.

Here Are 5 Career Questions I Think You Should Ask Yourself Daily:

1. Am I doing something that is in alignment with my core values?

You can never be happy in the long term if you are working at an enterprise that is not in alignment with who you are and what you value. If you are someone who cares deeply about the environment, you will feel out of alignment if you work for an oil company or a company that routinely releases smog into the air. You might want to consider that before taking a job with that type of organization. There are some jobs that aren't worth taking no matter how much they may pay if they make you feel like you are not living in alignment with your basic values...what you care about deeply.

2. Am I doing something that will leave a lasting impact?

As I talk with mid-career professionals who find themselves at a career crossroads, I hear a common refrain. “I want to do something that is meaningful. I care less about the money than I do about doing something fulfilling.”

Making money is important. We need it, after all. We must pay the bills. We need to have money to raise our families and take trips and do the things that it takes money to do. Money alone isn’t enough to make us happy with work, however. The 70% of Americans who either hate their jobs or feel disengaged with them are making *money*, but they are finding that money just isn’t enough to make them feel like they are making a difference. They want to do something that makes them feel that they are leaving a long-term impact on the world.

3. Am I doing something that is in alignment with my natural talents, aptitude, and dispositions?

I have a friend who decided to major in earth science and agronomy when he went to college. This was a surprise to me because he is a musician and an artist. Math and science had never been strengths. He made the calculation, however, that he couldn’t “make any money” playing music or painting pictures or drawing, so he went with his pragmatic side. Thirty years later, he has never had a sustainable job in earth science or agronomy. He may have been right about the fact that he couldn’t make a lot of money playing music or drawing and painting, but he might have been happier in the long run working in areas that came more easily to him.

When selecting a career, I recommend that you select one that allows you to play to your strengths. If you don’t know what your natural aptitude is or what your dispositions and inclinations happen to be, take some time to figure it out. Take the Myers-Briggs assessment, take a Pathway Planner assessment,

take the StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment. Learn about yourself using the Enneagram model...find as many different ways to learn about yourself as you can. Still don't know what your natural strengths are? Ask a friend or family member to tell you. They will know.

Here is a case in point: When I was in high school, I made the comment to a friend that I had no natural talent. My sister was the artist in the family, and my brother was the musician. I couldn't draw a stick figure, and I can plunk on the piano because I took lessons for ten years, but I have no natural musical talent. My friend looked at me aghast and said, "Are you kidding? Your talent is knowing what to say to people and how to say it." Boom. I had no idea. I also had no idea that other people recognized me as someone they could depend upon, but my senior year in high school, my classmates voted me the "Most Dependable Girl" in our class. I was stupefied. You mean everyone isn't dependable? Uh, as it turns out, no! You may need help, but you need to check in with yourself to make sure the work you are doing comes relatively easy to you.

4. Am I stretching myself a little every day?

Yes, I know I just said that your work should be in alignment with your talents, aptitude, and dispositions, but that doesn't mean it shouldn't also involve challenging you a bit. We need to stretch in order to grow. If you can find a career that allows you play to your strengths *and* challenges you enough to make you grow, you have hit the career jackpot.

5. Can I see myself doing this same work five or ten years from now?

This is a critical question that you should ask yourself every month if not every day. Let me share with you that the next ten years will fly by if you don't decide to take notice and plan accordingly. I can attest to the fact that as a young teacher, when I looked at my retirement statement in 1975 (when I got my first teaching job), 2017 was my projected retirement date. Not only did that sound fantastical because

it involved negotiating a whole new century (remember the Y2K concern?) but it sounded so far *away*.

Well, guess what...2017 is now just around the corner.

Whatever your projected retirement date may be, you need to consider what you want to be doing between now and then. If you are simply white-knuckling it at your current job hoping to live long enough to make it to retirement, you are approaching your career with the wrong mindset. I firmly believe that work should be fun and fulfilling! You need to believe that your work can be more than just work.

You deserve to be working at a career that makes you happy! Think about these questions every day so that you choose work that will help you be happy, fulfilled, and feeling like what you do for a living makes a difference to you, your family, and the rest of the planet.

This article is online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/career-questions-ask-yourself-daily/>.

8 Ways You're Sucking the Life Out of Your Job Search

I meet new job seekers all of the time in the course of my work as a Career Transition Coach. The ones who just got laid off or just decided to go back to work after taking time off for whatever reason, **start out thinking that they can handle the job search process on their own.** After all, they have found their previous jobs with little trouble, so they have the attitude of "I've got this and I don't need anyone's help."

RELATED: Need some job search advice? [Watch these tutorials!](#)

On the flip side, I also meet people who have been looking for a while, and they are feeling pretty dejected. They have lost their sense of enthusiasm for the search, and they don't know what they are doing wrong, but they know *something* isn't working.

Whether you are just starting out or you have been job hunting for a while, here are **eight ways you're sucking the life out of your job search:**

1. You don't know what you don't know.

If you haven't been involved in job hunting for the last few years, you really can't be blamed for this, but the fact is that job hunting isn't what it used to be. Everything has changed from the days when you read through the wanted section of the newspaper, circled the jobs that sounded appealing, and set off to find a human that you could talk to about the qualifications you might need for the job. Like many aspects of modern life, the Internet has changed how people job hunt today, so you need to bone up on the basics of job search strategy as soon as possible.

2. You don't recognize when you need help.

Too often, job seekers think they can navigate job boards, write their own résumés and cover letters and slap up a profile on LinkedIn and that's all they need to do. The job hunting landscape of today

practically requires that you seek help from a qualified professional. Consider...if you were sick, you wouldn't think it a sign of weakness to go to a doctor for treatment, would you? Why, then, should you consider that hiring a Career Coach who can offer assistance and actually ease some of your pain and discomfort as a sign of weakness? In today's landscape, it is foolish to think that you can find the job you want (and deserve) without some professional assistance, and you don't have to break the bank to do it. Many coaches offer special group rates to help make their help affordable to those who are on a limited budget. Seek them out and get them to help you.

3. You are passive and don't have a realistic job search strategy.

Even if you hire a career coach, they can't and won't actually find your job for you. That is up to you! Too often, job hunters get lazy about their search strategy, especially as it drags out over several months. Indeed, they don't really *have* a strategy...they are just applying for jobs willy-nilly and then wonder why they aren't meeting with success. The successful job search strategy includes your owning your plan and working it daily for at least a few hours a day.

4. You don't know what you want to do, and therefore don't know where to find what you want.

This problem shows up frequently, especially with mid-career professionals who find themselves suddenly at a career crossroads. These folks have been in the work force long enough to have learned what they like to do and what they don't like to do and would rather never do again. This is important information, but often the job seeker who isn't focused on what they want to do just sends applications out for any old job that sounds like what they have done before or something they *could* do if they had to. In my opinion, this is the wrong approach. You need to know what you want and then become laser focused on locating it. Otherwise, you run the risk of taking a job offer and finding out in just a few weeks or months that it is not a good fit for you. In the end, you are right back where you started.

6. You also need to know what your strengths are, and you need to be able to articulate them clearly.

Far too often, when I meet with a new client, I ask them what it is they bring to the table with regard to their skills set, their aptitude, their natural talents, etc. Too often, they look at me blankly. Or, worse, they shrug as though they haven't given it much thought. You need to know how to explain to a potential hiring manager why he or she should take a chance on you. You need to be able to sell yourself. I don't mean to sell yourself in a braggadocious way but in a way that clearly and concisely lays out who you are and what you do well. More importantly, you need to be able to communicate how what you do well is why they need to hire you ASAP!

7. You spend too much time behind the computer looking at job boards and not enough time networking in person.

A lot of job hunters make this mistake. They think their next job will come from one of the dozens of job applications they have spent hours filling out. The fact is that only about 20% of the jobs that are being filled today are filled from random job applications. Eighty percent of the jobs that are being filled today are being filled by introductions to people who know someone who knows someone who met you at a networking event—or at a party or over coffee—or *somewhere out and away from your computer*.

8. You hate networking and you find every reason not to do it.

Unfortunately for you, there is no getting around the need to get out of the house and talk to real people when you are job searching. You *need* people now. You need them to know about you. You need them to know that you are on the market. The trick is to get out there and talk to people and not let them sense your fear or your desperation. You should also not make the mistake of thinking that networking is all about YOU. The successful networker also reciprocates by offering tips or introductions to people who might help their counterpart.

9. You let your mojo go.

No one enjoys being around someone who is sad and depressed all of the time. When you lack confidence in yourself, it is hard to convince a hiring manager that they should have confidence in you. You must work at building your own self-esteem and recognize that work is only one part of who you are. Don't lose sight of the fact that even when you are not working, you are talented, you are capable, and you are simply in a transitional period. This too shall pass! You must continue to believe in yourself, however, and you must believe in your own capabilities. It is easy to get down and to get down on yourself when you receive rejection after rejection. A colleague of mine once said, however, that every "no" just gets you closer to "yes." In addition to staying on top of your job search do things that you enjoy during this transitional period. It is also important to remember to stay healthy during this transitional phase by taking care of your physical self. Remind yourself that this is just a temporary phase in your life. It does not define who you are any more than a job title defines you as a human being. Use this time as a learning experience. You will then be able to help others sometime in the future. In the meantime, find people who can motivate and inspire you to stay on track and *stop* sucking the life out of your job search.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/job-search-sucking-life/>.

10 Tips for The Overworked, Burned Out Professional

Are you suffering from a case of job burnout? Job burnout is a very specific type of stress that differs from the stress that we experience as part of a more or less “normal” life experience.

Related: [How And When To Say ‘No’ At Work](#)

The folks at the Mayo Clinic offer that job burnout is a “state of physical, emotional or mental exhaustion combined with doubts about your competence and the value of your work.”

Having experienced a severe case of job burnout myself at one point in my professional life, I have some suggestions that I would like to share that might help you avoid the pain of burnout on the job. Try one or more of the following ten tips to see if they might help. (I wish I had.)

1. Drink the recommended amount of water and make healthy eating choices.

When feeling stressed, it is far too easy to default to eating for comfort instead of for health. “Comfort foods” are those that are high in fat and sugar, and they do, in fact, help you feel better because they boost the level of dopamine in your brain.

In the long run, however, they do more harm than good. They add unneeded weight to your body and make you feel sluggish once the sugar “high” has worn off. In the long run, you are better served to avoid those fatty foods and make healthier choices. Your body needs the minerals and nutrients that whole foods offer.

You also need to drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. Your body flushes out the toxins that it manufactures daily when it is properly hydrated. Eating and drinking more mindfully help to a degree if you are feeling the ill effects of job burnout and the stress that accompanies it.

2. Exercise.

Just as it is far too easy to make poor choices concerning what to eat when you feel stressed, you may default to not wanting to work out regularly. Exercise, however, can help work off some of the frustration and pent up anger that may be accompanying your job burnout symptoms.

Work out for at least 30 minutes a day three to four times a week even if it is nothing more than taking a brisk walk around the neighborhood. Working up a good sweat may help to alleviate some of your pent up emotions around work, and vigorous workouts can help to produce endorphins that will help elevate your mood.

3. Get the sleep you need.

Sleep is routinely ignored as bodily need. We kid ourselves if we think we can either delay or defer the sleep that we need for optimum health and performance. We should neither delay nor defer sleep, and we need a certain number of hours each night. More and more, research is supporting the notion that everyone needs between six and a half and eight hours of sleep in order to operate at their optimum level.

If you are staying up late in order to get extra work done, you may be engaging in counter-productive behavior. Your brain needs to turn off from work periodically. Working late hours and failing to get the rest your entire body—including your brain—can hurt your productivity rather than help it. Do yourself a favor and decide to make sleep a priority. Your mood will improve and perhaps your attitude about your job will, too.

4. Organize and prioritize your work.

Your sense of job dissatisfaction and burnout may be due to a sense of overwhelm which is only exasperated if you have allowed things like books and papers to pile up around you. Take the time to organize your workspace. Put files in folders and label them. Throw out what is no longer needed. Prioritize tasks and projects. If you need help, ask for it. There is more harm to be done in trying to do everything yourself and letting things fall apart than in recognizing that you need help and asking for it in a timely manner.

5. Take time away from your desk at lunchtime and during breaks.

Gold stars are not awarded to the workaholics who never step away from their desks, even when they need to. You may be working for a raise or a promotion, but doing so at the risk of your health and well-being is not a good strategy. Research supports the fact that you need to **give your mind... and your body... periodic breaks throughout the day.**

Take a morning break. Go out to lunch with friends or colleagues and try to talk about something other than work over your meal. Take a mid-afternoon break by walking around the building rather than going to the vending machine or the coffee maker. Steer clear of late afternoon snacks that are high in sugar and carbohydrates or caffeine. Do take a break, however, in order to help your brain reset itself every few hours.

6. Take time off.

If you are feeling a real sense of job burnout as in you are considering quitting your job altogether, take some time off first to see if that might be what you need. Perhaps you just need a long weekend or a couple weeks of vacation instead of a whole new job. At least by taking some time away from the immediate source of your stress, you may gain some perspective that you are currently lacking. Don't do anything rash. If you have some time to take, do it before making any life changing decision.

7. Seek support when you need it.

Most companies offer an Employee Assistance Program or EAP. These services are free of charge for the employee, and they are confidential. You can make an appointment, go in and talk to someone and share your concern about yourself and your sense of burnout. Perhaps all you need is someone to talk to so that you can talk through whatever it is that is getting to you. If you use this resource and you still feel like the job is the problem, at least you will have taken the time and made the effort to get some perspective on the matter.

8. Unplug from your electronic devices and the constant news cycle.

Turn off the computer, cell phone, and even the TV for a short period every day. We tend to stay so plugged in that it is difficult to turn off our brains. Part of the sense of overwhelm that some people experience is the result of the inability to relax and get away from things... ever. This is especially true if you are in the kind of job where you need to be reachable 24/7.

I know that for me, part of my job burnout was the result of feeling that I had to be available all of the time... even when I was supposed to be "off." In four years, I never got to take a decent vacation where I could responsibly turn off the phone or not check email. As a result, at the end of those four years, I was so exhausted that I needed six months to rest, relax, and rejuvenate. Most people don't have six months that they can take out of their lives like I did. Do yourself a favor and pace yourself so that you don't get to that point.

8. Consider making an attitude adjustment regarding your work.

It is possible that most of the pressure you feel is self-imposed. Do you really have to be burning the midnight oil or giving up on the family vacation in order to do what needs to be done at work? The pressure you feel may be coming from your sense of obligation or responsibility, but is it really

necessary? Take a look at that possibility, at least. If it turns out that your sense of burnout is self-imposed, adjust your schedule and your attitude accordingly. You may feel an immediate sense of relief, as a result.

9. If an attitude adjustment doesn't work, consider other viable options.

If, after considering all of these options and taking some time away from the situation, you still feel depleted and unfulfilled by your current job situation, it may be time to think about making a change. Is a new job a realistic possibility? Is it possible for you to find a position in which you might operate with more autonomy and less stress? Do you need to consider what those options would be? Do you need a job with less responsibility? Do you need more help in a similar position? Do you need more clerical assistance? Do you need a different job altogether? Only you can answer these questions, just as you are the only person who can determine if you are experiencing job burnout and how severe your job burnout may be.

The bottom line is that job burnout is real. It is not something you made up. If you are feeling emotionally depleted, and you are experiencing a sense of just being “worn out” physically, emotionally, and mentally, then you may be experiencing job burnout. You need to take a look at it and consider what you can do about it. Life is too short to spend it feeling constantly overwhelmed. Consider what you need to do for yourself in order to take better care of yourself. You need to do this for you. You also owe it to the family and friends who love you and may be feeling like you are “missing in action” because your mind is always on work even when your body is somewhere else.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/job-search-sucking-life/>.

The Importance of Clear Communication When Job Searching

Have you ever found yourself in the middle of a misunderstanding with someone because of a breakdown in communication? Perhaps you used an ambiguous word and you were misinterpreted. Perhaps you sent an email that someone misunderstood because the recipient couldn't hear the inflection in your voice or see your body language, which are integral parts of any communication. For whatever reason, you suddenly found yourself on the wrong end of someone's wrath, and you weren't quite sure what happened.

It happens to each of us every once in a while. More often than not, you get a chance to clarify what you meant and you can smooth things over. What if you are applying for a job, however, and your failure to communicate clearly makes the difference between your getting the job and not? There are no take-backs and no do-overs. You are just toast.

It is critically important for you to be careful with how you communicate during any stage of the job search process. You must employ every communication skill you have at the highest possible level. Your listening skills must allow you to understand what of recruiter or hiring manager may be telling you about what skills required for a particular job. Your writing skills must be impeccable. Your verbal skills must be exceptional. And your ability to convey that you are a great communicator must be part of your overall application process.

Start by making sure that you put your written skills to good use in your email communications, résumé, cover letter, and all other written communications. They need to be 100% error free. Have someone else proofread for you if necessary. You cannot afford to be discounted because of a spelling error or punctuation problem.

If you get past the first barrier with your ability to convey your job worthiness through your writing skills, you will also need to be able to communicate clearly with your verbal skills and your ability to listen. When called in for an interview, listening is as important as

speaking. Make sure you understand the question. Be willing to ask for clarification. Remember Stephen Covey's Habit #5 from the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." Remember, good communication is a two-way street.

If you need to hone your communication skills before launching your job search process, do so, but be prepared to demonstrate your communication prowess throughout the job search process. It can make the difference between being successful in your job search or not.

This article is available online at <http://careerhmo.com/the-importance-of-clear-communication-when-job-searching-2/>.

Is It Time to Brush Up on Your Skills?

The pace of change in today's world is mind-boggling. There are so many innovations that are emerging on a daily basis that it is difficult for us to keep up. Changes are occurring in the workplace as well as socially and technologically. For those of a certain age, keeping up with the changes can feel overwhelming. If you are over 50, there may be times when you wish you could just slow things down a bit to give you time to catch up.

The bad news is that nothing is going to slow down. The momentum contributing to changes is already going, so if you are struggling to keep up, it may be time for an attitude adjustment. Don't resist... join the innovators. Get on board or get left behind. Those are your choices.

If you are over 50 and find yourself in search of a job because your company just merged, and your job was eliminated, it may be time to get back to school to brush up on your skills. I talked with a client just recently who decided she needed to go back to school to sharpen and renew her IT skills. The IT field is one that changes rapidly, and even a few months can make a difference between your skills being up to date or being outdated.

Whether you have a job where you are feeling stifled and you want a change, or you don't have a job and need to transition into another one, you need to do an honest skills assessment. You may not have the same level of comfort with some technological platforms as some of your younger counterparts. You don't have to forego achieving a certain degree of skill, however, to remain competitive in the job market.

If you aren't sure whether your skills are up to speed, start meeting with individuals who are in the field in which you want to work. Invite them for coffee. Pick their brains. Ask them questions. Learn what you might need to know to feel that you are offering skills that are transferrable into a new job you are interested in pursuing. If you learn that you need a new credential or a new certification, check to see what programs might be available in your area or online that you might take to get the training you need.

Every profession is experiencing rapid change with no exceptions. Even if the profession itself isn't changing, the way we work is changed forever because of email, LinkedIn, newsfeeds, etc. We are all bombarded with information every single day, and sometimes it is easy to feel that it is just too much.

Catch up or get left behind. Stark choices for sure, but that is just the way it is, and the pace of change will continue to speed up as opposed to slowing down. Upgrade your skills and adopt the attitude of a lifelong learner. The world is changing. You need to decide to change along with it or get left behind for good.

This article is available online at <http://careerhmo.com/skills-brush-up/>.

How to Stay Positive During a Long Job Search

There is little getting around the fact that job search can be a soul-sucking process that eats at your self-esteem and sense of worth. If you engage in the typical search, you will likely be turned down—rejected—multiple times before you finally land. The process can take weeks or months depending on the industry in which you work and the level at which you hope to be entering. An entry level job may be filled more quickly, for example, than a high level, executive position.

Related: [5 Tips To Stay Positive And Motivated While Job Searching](#)

As far as you, the candidate, are concerned, you rarely expect the process to take as long as it takes, but that is the key element: it takes as long as it takes. You can't rush the process, and you can't, unfortunately, wave a magic wand and make it all be over, no matter how much you might want for it just to **be over**. No, you have to practice patience and perseverance, even in the face of a protracted search.

I would recommend that you adopt the fundamentals that are embedded in Don Miguel Ruiz's book, *The Four Agreements* as you undertake your search. In that bestselling book, Ruiz offers four life strategies that could easily be translated into good advice for job seekers. For example, Agreement #1 is "**Be Impeccable In Your Word.**" During your job search, it may be easy to fall into the habit of whining, complaining, name calling, and so on. You may feel the need to denigrate a former employer or colleague, for example, or to blame someone else for your current circumstances. Avoid engaging in that sort of self-defeating dialogue, whether it is with another person or just within yourself. Maybe you did get a raw deal, but what good does it to do dwell on that now? It is time to move on and demonstrate your professionalism by taking responsibility for all of your actions and interactions, and using your words to build up instead of tear down. This includes the words you use to build yourself up rather than to tear yourself down.

The second agreement is **“Don’t Take Anything Personally.”** This one is tough given that we are hard-wired as humans to look for insults and disparagements. We egotistically consider that we are center stage and everything that goes on around us somehow has something to do with us. While that may be true if you are two years old, it is not the case once you are an adult! Even when you feel that someone has somehow slighted you, it is more than likely that they are just busy and not aware that you feel insulted. Also, as far as your job search goes, you must remember that you may be one of a hundred or more applications. It is unreasonable to expect that you will be treated like anything other than what you are which is an applicant for a job that may or may not ever become yours. Don’t take it personally when you don’t get a call or an interview or the job itself. Someone more qualified than you or someone who they just liked better than you got the job. But don’t take it personally! Do you want to work where you are not the best fit or the most qualified or where you will might not be liked for who you are? Of course not!

The third agreement is also perfect for the job seeker. It is, **“Don’t Make Assumptions.”** Don’t think that you can know everything that is happening behind the scenes, and don’t make up stuff in the absence of real information! You will just make yourself miserable imagining what is going on, and you can’t possibly know what is going on anywhere other than with you at any given point in time. You have to let go of the assumptions that you are likely going to want to create while you wait eagerly for the phone to ring.

Finally, the fourth agreement is **“Always Do Your Best.”** At the end of the day, that is all you or anyone else can do. As a job seeker, however, doing your best means knowing what you are doing concerning your search. Are you working on your job search every single day? Are you following up on leads promptly? Are you sure your résumé is as strong as it should be? Are you networking and meeting people who might be good connections for you?

If you aren't sure, it may be time to solicit professional help. You probably thought you didn't need a job search coach. You might be wrong. Even if you come from a Human Resources background, you may need an objective third party to look over all of your job search documents, and you need someone to help keep you accountable and on track. Beyond that function, however, your job search coach can help keep you motivated. Sometimes you just need a cheerleader...someone who will remind you that you **can** do this. You **can** have the job of your dreams. You **can** do what your heart desires. You don't have to take the first offer that comes your way. You don't have to settle!

Staying positive and on track every single day can be tough, however. Every once in a while, it is okay to have a little pity party and let yourself have some ice cream or whatever your guilty pleasure is when you are feeling low. You are human after all. All of the rejections you may be getting take a toll on even the most confident candidate. But you can't let the rejections get to you, and you can't give up. This is your life! *You* get to decide how to live it. Don't ever forget that. You can do whatever you want.

Knowing that will help you stay positive throughout the process.

I won't sugarcoat it, though. Staying positive during a long job search takes resilience and requires that you maintain faith even when you may feel like giving up. The fact is, however, that you don't have the option of giving up. You have to keep going until you find the job you want...and you can do that even if it takes a while. I sometimes have to remind my clients that "It takes the time it takes." The wait can be excruciating, I know, but, but it goes with the territory that is the job search process.

Read *The Four Agreements*, and use other uplifting, inspirational messages that will help you through this period of your life. Affirmations can help as well as surrounding yourself with a strong support group and the services of a career coach. This is an uncertain time in your life for sure, but you can use it

to explore interests you may not have had time to explore before, so use some of your time for that. Do something fun that will take your mind off of your search periodically. And remember a favorite quote of mine from John Lennon: “Everything will be okay in the end. If it’s not okay, it’s not the end.”

Everything will be okay. Just hang in there.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/job-search-long-stay-positive/>.

Taking Care of Yourself When Job Hunting

It is no secret that job hunting is a stressful endeavor. Whether you have left your job by choice or not, you can feel uncertain, unsettled, and more than a little overwhelmed while your life is in limbo.

Job search is very different today from what it was even five years ago. If you find yourself looking for work, regardless of your age or level of experience, it is important that you remember to take care of yourself.

To a great extent, job search is like having a full-time job. At least that is the case if you are serious about finding something that feels more like a “job” and more like a real career or vocation. As you will when you land your next great job, while job hunting, you need to establish a routine. Rather than sleeping in, you need to get up at a regular hour every day. Most importantly, don’t neglect balancing your physical self-care with your emotional self-care, and don’t neglect your family and friends. You need to take care of yourself and those around you will not stop while you look for a new job. Indeed, you may have people coming at you asking you, “What did you do to get a job today?”

Unfortunately, job hunting is much more complicated—and therefore ever more stressful—than it once was. My dad experienced a time in his life when he went from job to job. After ten years with one company, he was suddenly let go on Friday before the family was set to head out on our annual summer vacation. We went on vacation anyway, and when we got home the following Friday, he went to work looking for a job. He was back to work by Monday.

That would be almost impossible in today’s world. Unfortunately, he was never really satisfied with that job or any of the subsequent jobs because he was not thinking in terms of what he wanted to do as opposed to what he could do. Today’s savvy job hunter starts looking at job hunting a little differently.

Regardless of your mindset, however, job hunting today requires a whole set of skills that you may or may not currently have. When was the last time you updated your résumé? Do you know how to



customize it for each job that in which you may be interested? What about cover letters? Do you know how to write a letter that will get someone to read it? And don't forget your LinkedIn profile must be optimized and ready for prime time.

All the while and in spite of these various challenges, it is imperative that you not forget to take care of your SELF. You must not let yourself get run down. You must continue to eat well, exercise, and sleep to get the rest you need. Failing to do so might well result in your getting sick or depressed or both.

Too often, people mistakenly think that they can eat whatever they want, forget about exercising, and delay or defer sleep until later when they are feeling particularly stressed. The truth is, however, that it is during those times of stress—like when you are between jobs—that you should be more vigilant about taking care of your physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

This phase—this time of looking for a job—is temporary. It WILL pass as long as you don't give up and stop looking. You are just in a temporary transitional phase. What isn't temporary is your need to take care of your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual self.

For a FREE “cheat sheet” outlining the seven strategies you should be using to manage better your stress, [go here](#). You will be asked to offer your email address and in return you will receive a FREE downloadable PDF that is yours to keep, use, and share as you see fit.

Self-care is not selfish. If you are going to be your best, and if you are going to bring your best self to your next great job, you need to BE your best by taking care of your various needs. Taking care of yourself during your job search is critical for you and it is critical to your ultimate success.

This article is available online at <http://careerhmo.com/job-hunting-taking-care-yourself/>.

Self-Confidence Can Definitely Impact Your Job Search

When it comes to self-confidence, some individuals seem to have a greater share of it than others by virtue of their inherent nature. I have been known to say that self-confidence is the “secret sauce of success.” Some of us struggle with feeling it, however, while we falsely believe that everybody else has it in spades!

When job seeking, it is critically important that you not let circumstances beat you down and rob you of your confidence. I realize even as I write that, though, that it is much easier said than done. Dealing with rejection is never easy, and if you are job seeking, you may be dealing with it almost daily. What do you do, then, to boost your sense of confidence in yourself and your abilities? I suggest that you consider the following steps:

1. Review your successes.

Make a list and remind yourself of all of your achievements, successes and special abilities. When you start to get down on yourself, take a look at the list and remember that you have had many successes in the past, and you will be successful in the future.

2. Use mantras or positive affirmations.

Make up a mantra for yourself or find a positive affirmation that you can pull up and use when you find yourself spiraling into a funk. Read something inspirational or uplifting. Something as simple as “I can do this,” can be powerful in a moment of self-doubt.

3. Surround yourself with supporters.

You do not need to have Negative Nellies and Debbie Downers around you during this time in your life. Find and hang out with those who are going to support you and help to lift you up as you need them. You know who they are. Hang on to them and let them support you.

4. Hire a coach *and* select a mentor.

You may benefit from having a coach... someone who is a professional and who can help to guide you while you are in the midst of your job search. Also, find a mentor or mentors who will be happy to help you along. Learn from them and take their advice. Note that I suggest having both a mentor AND a coach... they are distinctly different roles, and you need both.

5. “Fake it until you can make it.”

Sometimes, you just have to **fake** feeling confident, even if you aren't feeling it. If you are about to go in for an interview, you need to dress for the occasion, but you also need to prepare yourself with an invisible cloak of confidence. People are naturally drawn to those who are self-confident and self-assured, so you need to *appear* confident even if you are a bundle of nerves.

At the end of the day, self-confidence is an “inside job.” No one can *give* it to you. You must claim it for yourself. Theodore Roosevelt once said, “Believe you can and you're halfway there.” So, *believe*... believe in yourself... believe in your abilities... and believe you will ultimately find your way through the transition of job search to a great opportunity and a wonderful new career.

This article is available online at <http://careerhmo.com/job-search-self-confidence/>.

3 Reasons LinkedIn is Critical During Your Job Search

I recently offered a presentation to a group of about 50 mid-career job seekers on the topic of social media usage while job hunting. I urged them to get savvy about their social media footprint, and I offered that recruiters and hiring managers are increasingly checking out candidates on the Internet. The top three social media sites, at least for the moment, are Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Related: [6 Things Recruiters Want To See On Your LinkedIn Profile](#)

I don't dispute that Facebook and Twitter can be useful to the savvy job seeker, but I remain an avid proponent for having a strong LinkedIn profile as a first priority for the average job seeker. (I offer a workshop on how to use LinkedIn during one's job search.)

1. LinkedIn is the “professional” showcase for you as a candidate for any job or promotion.

This is the site where you post information that is only pertinent to who you are professionally in the world of work. LinkedIn is where you want to make your profile shine and stand out from others who have similar (or even better) credentials than you may have. Let's face facts: it doesn't matter how great a candidate you are for a particular job if you can't get a call. If you don't have a stand out LinkedIn profile, you will never even get a look.

2. LinkedIn is where you can create numerous critical connections and build a powerful network.

Optimize your profile so that you can look like the standout candidate that you are. Use LinkedIn for establishing important connections with people who may be in a position to help you shorten your job search. Build a series of connections with people who know you professionally and can vouch for your good work in previous jobs. Connect with previous employers (if they will agree to connect with you) and colleagues from previous job sites.

When it is appropriate, ask for—and provide—endorsements. The Law of Reciprocity provides that if you offer endorsements of others, your endorsements will begin to build up. Having endorsements provides the impression that you are, in fact, someone who can do a particular job or that you have a specific set of skills.

In addition to building endorsements, however, you also want to use your LinkedIn connections to rekindle old relationships with individuals who may have moved into influential positions inside their company. If they discover that you are available, it is possible that they might know of a job in their company that would be right for you, or they may know someone with whom they can connect you who does. LinkedIn provides a rich (even though it is virtual) way to build acquaintances and create solid professional connections.

3. You can use Groups to build your credibility and your visibility.

LinkedIn Groups provide a place for professionals in the same industry, or with similar interests to share content, find answers, post and view jobs, make business contacts, and establish themselves as industry experts. You can find Groups to join by using the search feature at the top of your homepage or viewing suggestions of Groups you may like. You can also create a new Group focused on a particular topic or industry. You may join up to 100 different groups. You can participate in Group discussions by liking, commenting upon, or sharing a thread. By doing so, you have an opportunity to raise your visibility on LinkedIn, and that may lead to more connections that could be helpful to you in your search.

LinkedIn has become increasingly important to job seekers in recent years. With over 400 million users worldwide, it hasn't reached the scope of Facebook yet, but given that it is growing by two new members per second, it may not be long before that happens. The global economy makes having connections all over the world more necessary, and LinkedIn can assist you with that. Additionally, you

can use LinkedIn to help you learn about companies that you might be interested in working for, and you can also use it to search for a job by using its Job Search feature.

I know some people who start an account with LinkedIn and then forget about it. That is worse than having no account at all. Do yourself a favor and work on getting your LinkedIn profile up to date and ready for prime time. If you need help, there are resources for getting any level of support you may need. Just do it. You won't be sorry.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/linkedin-crucial-job-search/>.

4 Ways to Add Value to LinkedIn Groups

Most of us know that it is important to join Groups on LinkedIn. Whether you are interested in the topic of the Group, or it is related to your profession or industry, it's important to get involved in something about which you have a genuine interest. Here are some tips on how you can **add value** to the LinkedIn Groups to which you belong.

Related: [10 Powerful Ways To Optimize LinkedIn Groups](#)

1. Join groups that are directly connected to the work you do, the work you *want to be doing*, and causes that light you up and spark a passion.

LinkedIn Groups provide individuals with similar interests to post, share, and even converse on topics and issues in which they are interested and about which they want to share information. A good rule of thumb is to strive to participate in LinkedIn Groups about once a week. Find great content and share it appropriately. (Make sure you have read the content, so you know what it says.)

One source of great content is LinkedIn's very own Pulse, which is helpful because LinkedIn "knows" your interests. When you click on Pulse, you will see the various articles that LinkedIn thinks you might find of interest. When you find something that warrants being shared, feel free to like the article, comment on the article, and share it with one or more of your groups.

2. Engage members of your Group by asking a question.

Sometimes individuals will post provocative questions to spur a debate or discussion. Be careful not to be *too* provocative...you could get yourself in trouble...but asking if members of the group have been successful pursuing a particular strategy or program might spark some conversation that could benefit the entire group—not just you. If your question or post is relevant to more than one Group to which you belong, then post to all of them. Be mindful, however, if you belong to a lot of Groups. You don't want to be flooded with responses all at once.

3. Be conscious of the fact that you are building a personal and professional brand when participating in Group discussions.

Be courteous, be thoughtful, and contribute in a positive way in every post and every interaction.

LinkedIn isn't like Facebook where individuals sometimes let their emotions get the better of them as they engage in political or philosophical debates or discussions. LinkedIn is a professional venue, and the tone should always be respectful and professional. Keep your snarky remarks to yourself. (I wouldn't recommend posting snarky remarks on Facebook, either, but we have seen that in abundance along with hastily posted and sometimes hastily withdrawn Tweets that were formulated in the heat of the moment. LinkedIn is definitely not the place for snarkiness.)

4. Avoid the temptation to be self-promotional.

Your Groups are places where you exhibit thought leadership. It is a place where you participate as part of a larger professional community. If you use it to promote yourself or a product or service, you will tarnish the brand you are so carefully building. Even LinkedIn offers that "LinkedIn Groups are not the venue for self-promotion—it is a forum for discussion..." ([LinkedIn 101: How to Build an Engaged Community on LinkedIn.](#)) I recently read a post by a regular contributor. While the information was useful, it was also filled with hints of holding back the best value in order to drive readers to his business page. At the end of the post, someone commented, "This wasn't a post, it was an advertisement." *Ouch.* Don't make that mistake.

Even if you are using your participation in LinkedIn Groups to drive up your online visibility and presence in hopes of creating more traffic and the possibility of business, avoid the obvious self-promotional post. Your potential client or customer wants great content—not to be sold to! Share valuable content, and as people come to **know, like and trust you**, they will gravitate toward you and may become your next client or customer naturally. You have to let them come to you, however, so guard against the overly promotional post or self-promotional discussion in your next Group post.

LinkedIn is a great resource for professionals and it provides a powerful way for entrepreneurs to find leads, prospects, and clients. It is also a great place for sharing valuable information, however, that advances contemplative discussion, thoughtful sharing, and even collaboration. Nurture your LinkedIn network and build an online reputation (brand) as someone who brings value to every conversation in which you participate. Understanding LinkedIn and using it to your advantage will be well worth the time and effort you put into building your relationships within your Groups.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/linkedin-groups-add-value/>.

4 Ways to be Memorable on LinkedIn

I don't have to tell you that there is a lot of "noise" out there in social media land, and getting noticed is becoming more challenging by the day. If you are a job seeker who has just started your search, it is likely that you are already feeling overwhelmed with everything that is available to you both online and from in-person networking events.

Related: [The LinkedIn Profile Checklist Every Job Seeker Needs](#)

Job seekers receive all sorts of guidance including conflicting—and often contradictory—advice regarding their résumés, cover letters, and interviewing strategies. One area in which most of the counsel is fairly consistent, however, is the advice surrounding LinkedIn. The consensus is that you *must* have a LinkedIn profile, and it needs to be stellar to stand out from the crowd.

For a lot of people, LinkedIn is an embarrassing little secret. Most professionals know about LinkedIn and have an account because they have been told that they need to have one. No one has taken the time to explain to them WHY they need an account, however. As a result, there are a lot of incomplete profiles populating LinkedIn Land.

Here is what you need to know beyond all doubt: If you have been lucky enough to make it through the Applicant Tracking System and a real human being is looking at your résumé, one of the first things he or she will do is take a look at your LinkedIn profile. If you don't have it ready for "prime time," you will likely lose the opportunity to get the coveted call for an interview.

Here Are 4 Things You Must Do to Make Your LinkedIn Profile Memorable:

1. Have a professional looking photo.

You don't necessarily need a professional photographer to take your photograph, but it should be a head shot that is a) well-lit; b) has you looking into the camera and smiling; c) shows your face; and d)

doesn't look like you cropped yourself out of a group shot. If you can afford it, I believe it is worth the investment to have the headshot done professionally, but if funds are tight, at least take the time to put some thought and effort into your photo.

If you don't have a fantastic headshot, you will never get a serious look. This may sound unfair, but the fact is that we human beings are visual creatures. We want to *see* you. If we are considering hiring you, we want you to look professional, competent, and likable! It is tough trying to convey all of that in one photograph, but it is required, so don't whine about it...just do it! For help, seek out anonymous feedback from Photofeeler.com. Take several shots and upload them for reviews (it's free). Choose a shot that you are proud of and you won't mind having all over the Internet because that is where it will land.

2. Choose your LinkedIn headline carefully.

The "headline" is the space beneath your name. The conventional wisdom is that you should use keywords that convey what you know how to do and what you want to be doing moving forward in your career. Don't concentrate so much on what you have done in the past. Concentrate instead on your *future* self. Choose keywords that are likely to be searched by recruiters, hiring managers and Human Resource Directors. For those who are looking to distinguish themselves however, you might consider a branding statement that does the same thing but states the group you specialize in helping or how you solve a particular problem. For example, my headline says, "Career Transition Coach | I help individuals who are at a career crossroads find careers that are perfect for them." Depending upon your particular field, you may want to consider a similar problem-solving statement. Otherwise, opt for strong keywords that convey what you do and in what areas you are a *specialist*. Look at other headlines of individuals who do work you want to be doing to get a sense of what you might include in yours.

3. Make sure you have a customized URL.

Nothing screams LinkedIn “newbie” quite like not having a customized LinkedIn URL. Creating a customized URL is easy to do, and if you don’t take advantage of the opportunity, you wind up with a LinkedIn URL that looks like this: [linkedin.com/in/kittyboitnott34027caebe0r4](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kittyboitnott34027caebe0r4). What you want is the URL with your name as you can be found on LinkedIn. In some instances, if you have a name that other people also have, your name may have been taken, and you will be offered alternatives. Choose one that makes sense for you. Even if you have a URL that has numbers in it, it won’t be the mess that your original URL is. To change your LinkedIn assigned URL, hover your computer’s mouse over it, and when you are asked if you would like to customize your URL, say “yes,” and follow the directions.

4. Make your “Summary” section personal, authentic, and about your professional journey.

Besides the area where you have your photo, your headline, and your customized URL, the section where you can make yourself memorable to the casual scanner or the interested HR Director is your “Summary” section. Don’t make the mistake of making this section sound sterile or too much like a repeat of your résumé. You should take advantage of the opportunity to use your own, “real” voice and describe yourself and your professional journey in this section. Write in first person, and write a narrative that will help paint a picture of who you are in professional terms. Describe your successes and achievements. Quantify them where you can, but also be *personal*. Authenticity is a key ingredient when creating a memorable profile, so provide photographs, artifacts, video, and so on that might add interest and make your profile stand out. Use the entire section to promote yourself! Think of it as a way to make a great online impression, so don’t skimp, and don’t undervalue the opportunity you have here to make yourself memorable.

LinkedIn may have over 400 million users worldwide, but many of them haven't cracked the code on how to optimize their profiles yet. For proof, note the number of profiles with no profile photo and wasted pleas for help with "In Transition" or "Seeking a New Professional Opportunity" in their headlines. Note the number of people who haven't customized their URLs or optimized their "Summary" sections.

Don't be one of the lackluster users of LinkedIn. Make yourself memorable, and even after you have landed your next great job, keep your profile updated, and stay connected with your professional community through Groups. Endorse your colleagues and offer recommendations. You will receive endorsement and recommendations as a result.

You never know when someone may be on the lookout for someone with your particular set of skills and experience. Your LinkedIn profile could make the difference between your being considered for a wonderful opportunity or being overlooked because you didn't take full advantage of the opportunity LinkedIn provides. If you need help with your LinkedIn profile, help is always just a click away. Seek out the advice and expertise of those who have learned how to optimize LinkedIn as a professional online resource. It could well be worth the investment.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/linkedin-be-memorable/>.



How Frequently Should You Check Your LinkedIn Profile?

If you are in job seeking mode, you should have your LinkedIn profile optimized so that you are ready for “prime time” when a recruiter or hiring manager comes across it.

Related: [5 Things EVERY Brand Needs To Succeed](#)

However, completing your profile is only part of your challenge with LinkedIn. If you want to make the most of your presence there, you must also commit time as a regular user. You should be checking on your Groups and threads of discussions periodically throughout each day. Also, if you want to set yourself apart from the pack, you will want to post periodically on topics that you know well and are pertinent to your profession.

If you are a relatively new user of LinkedIn, you may wonder how often you should check your profile.

You may find yourself wondering, how often is often enough? The short answer is **at least three times a day**: in the morning between 8 and 9; mid-day around lunchtime; toward the end of the day between 4 and 5:30. The rationale is that is that you will likely see updates in your Groups, and new discussions pop up during those specific times. Additionally, it is likely that new job postings will appear during those particular times of the day.

You should definitely join Groups that are relevant to your professional interests. You should also comment on threads of discussion, share articles, and “like” discussions or comments to raise your visibility on LinkedIn. Additionally, if you are a decent writer, I recommend that you post a few times a month to generate discussion and get yourself noticed by those in your specific industry.

In addition to checking job postings, threads of discussion, and posts from those in your industry, you should use LinkedIn for connecting to individuals who might be in a position to offer a referral, a

recommendation or an endorsement. Each time you log in to LinkedIn, you are offered an opportunity to endorse individuals with whom you are already connected.

Take a moment to endorse those individuals that you know and can easily endorse for a particular skill. Avoid endorsing for skills that you don't know the individual can do...that cheapens your endorsement and calls your credibility into question...but endorse those individuals that you know for skills you know they have. Why? Through the Law of Reciprocity, individuals who receive an endorsement from you are more likely to offer endorsements in return.

The same rule of thumb goes for offering recommendations. To boost your LinkedIn profile, you should have 2-4 recommendations from co-workers or employers who have worked with you in the past. If you offer a recommendation, it is more likely that you will receive a recommendation from that individual or someone else who knows you.

Keeping your LinkedIn profile up to speed and making sure it is optimized takes time and effort, but the likelihood that it will pay off is well documented. Recruiters are turning to LinkedIn more and more often to find potential recruits. Be careful with your LinkedIn profile just as you would be careful with your résumé. Be aware of the “brand” that your profile conveys. And check your profile periodically and regularly with the intention of maintaining a profile that is worthy of a recruiter's—or a hiring manager's—attention.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/linkedin-profile-check-frequently/>.

3 Ways to Get More Endorsements on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the online platform for all things that relate to your professional brand, and you want to use it to your best advantage to the fullest extent that you can. You need to have your profile completed. Each section that is pertinent to you should be optimized.

Related: [How To Ask For LinkedIn Recommendations](#)

One easy and fairly straightforward way to add credibility to your profile is to get LinkedIn endorsements for skills you have developed and honed over the course of your work history. There are several ways to do that, and I am going to mention three in particular, but before I get into the ways to receive endorsements, I would like to offer a caveat about how you choose the skills for which you want to be endorsed.

LinkedIn offers you an opportunity to select from a multitude of skills and to choose up to 50 individual skills for which to be endorsed. It is far too easy to fall into the trap of selecting too many skills or picking skills in which you may have some limited proficiency. I want to offer a bit of advice here and suggest that you be selective (and a little restrained) when choosing which skills you want to be recognized for having.

Realistically, you probably don't need more than 20 discrete skills in your profile, and they should be clearly differentiated from one another. Be honest with yourself, and don't select skills that are not in alignment with jobs you have had in the past. Don't feel pressured to have 50 skills selected just because you can.

Select those skills that you have and that you have demonstrated over the course of your career(s) or job(s) so that people who have worked with you or who know you relatively well can endorse you with a clear conscience. When offering endorsements for others, only endorse them for skills you know they have, and avoid offering endorsements for skills you don't have first-hand knowledge of someone possessing. An example would be that on occasion, I receive endorsements for public speaking from individuals that I am sure have never heard me speak in public. I do have skill in public speaking, but it says something about the person who would endorse me for that skill when they have no first-hand experience of it, don't you think? Be careful and offer your endorsements with a sense of integrity. Only endorse people that you know have the skills you are endorsing them for, and only ask for and accept endorsements for skills you possess.

With that note of caution out of the way, let me offer that I think there are three easy and relatively painless ways to add endorsements to your LinkedIn profile.

1. Ask for Them.

If you are just starting your LinkedIn profile, and you want to build its credibility sooner rather than later, there is nothing wrong with you contacting people with whom you have worked and asking them for endorsements in skills you have listed on your profile. Most people who are using LinkedIn on a regular basis will be willing to endorse other individuals. It only takes a few moments, after all, and if they are people who know you and know your work, it should not be a hardship for them to offer an endorsement for you.

2. Offer Endorsements for Others.

The *Law of Reciprocity* dictates that as you offer other people endorsements, they will feel more inclined to return the favor. Again, don't endorse people for skills you don't know they have, but if you can offer an endorsement for someone, they will be far more inclined to return the favor.

3. Don't Confuse Endorsements with Recommendations.

When you offer an Endorsement, you are only offering a check-in-the-box acknowledgment that says, "I know So-and-So and I know she can lead a workshop." You check "Workshop Facilitation," and move on. A Recommendation is when you write a comment or a review for someone. Example: "I attended a workshop that So-and-So conducted, and she was fantastic! She organized the day around what the participants needed, she paced the program so that it wasn't too fast nor was it too slow, and she gave us plenty of time for small group and large group engagement and interaction. I would highly recommend her for anyone who wants a high-quality workshop."

Do you see the difference? A Recommendation is a much higher quality reference than an Endorsement. Don't confuse the two if you are requesting one or the other from an individual you have worked with or from a former employer or supervisor. You will make the recipient of the request feel awkward if you ask for a Recommendation as opposed to an Endorsement. If you are looking for a Recommendation instead of an Endorsement, request the Recommendation in person and determine that they feel comfortable offering the Recommendation before you send them the formal request. I have read articles on the topic of Endorsements where the authors have confused the two terms, so I offer this caution to make sure you don't make the same mistake.

LinkedIn is an important component of any professional's online brand. You need to build your own LinkedIn profile carefully and deliberately and that includes creating a list of skills that individuals who

know you professionally will feel comfortable offering endorsements for. As you build your endorsements, you build your professional credibility.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/get-linkedin-endorsements-ways/>.



Networking Event Coming Up? Put Your Best Brand Forward

Whether you are just starting your job search, or you have been job hunting for a while, it should not come as a surprise that networking is a necessary component of your search. I say that knowing full well that for some people, especially those who are just starting out, it *is* a surprise. Many job hunters mistakenly think that they can be successful by submitting dozens of job applications a day while sitting in front of their computers still in their pajamas. Surely if you are diligent in applying for enough different jobs, something will stick...right?

Related: [5 Things You MUST Do During Networking Events](#)

That logic would work if it weren't the case that only 20% of the jobs that are being filled today are being filled by job applications that miraculously make it through the maze of the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) and land on someone's desk. It can happen, certainly, but the facts speak for themselves. You limit your possibilities of finding opportunities if you never leave the house. I hate to break it to you, but the Job Fairy isn't going to come looking for you while you lounge around the house.

The hard, cold fact is that to be successful at this job search game, you have to get out of the house, and you have to network. It isn't enough just to show up at a networking event, however. You must show up prepared to present your "A-game." You must dress the part; you must be approachable and personable. Dare I say it? You must do your best to be charming and memorable! You need to be prepared to say succinctly what it is that you do in a way that the people with whom you speak will remember you. If they hear of an opening that isn't a good fit for them but might be a perfect fit for you, you want to have left a positive impression.

How do you put your best brand forward at a networking event? I believe you need to do the following 5 things:

1. Dress at least one step above whatever job you want...even if the event is promoted as a “business casual” event.

I am old school, so I believe that we have taken the idea of “business casual” to such an extreme that you never know how people will dress. Just recently, I attended an event where one of the younger attendees honestly looked as though he had wandered in off the street. He was disheveled to the point of his wrinkled shirt hanging loose and his hair looking like it hadn’t seen a comb since the night before. I was shocked, therefore, when he introduced himself as a young attorney who had just graduated from law school. He was offering that he was an “expert” in a particular kind of law, but all I could think was, “Seriously? This is how you show up for an event where you are making your first impression on 75 other people who might have connections that would be useful to you?”

Based on my first impression, I would hesitate to offer this young man an introduction based on how completely unprofessional he appeared. How hard is it to tuck in a shirt that doesn’t look like you just grabbed it out of the dirty clothes hamper? It is true that you never get a second chance to make a first impression, so you can’t afford to screw this one up when it should be such a no-brainer. Dress up a little! Make a good first impression!

2. Have business cards available to share.

Even if you are unemployed, you can have business cards made that are inexpensive yet are quite effective. You only need to include your name, your phone number, an email address, and your LinkedIn URL (assuming that you have customized your LinkedIn URL. If you haven’t done that, do it right now. Seriously.) Have the cards handy. Having to scramble for your cards makes you appear unorganized and

unprofessional. Stock up on extra cards as you head out the door, and have them in a place where you can reach them easily and exchange them gracefully.

Be careful about how you go about distributing your cards, however. Only offer a card when your conversation seems to lead to the conclusion that you want to plan to follow up for some reason. Ask the other person for his or her card. Then hold on to the card and follow up within 48 to 72 hours. Failing to follow up also sends the message that you are unorganized, unprofessional and that you didn't care about the exchange in the first place. If you aren't going to follow up with the people you meet at networking events, don't waste your time or theirs. Networking events are meant to offer introductions. Real relationships don't happen unless or until you follow up with those that you might help or who might be in a position to help you.

3. Smile and try to enjoy yourself.

Networking events can be painful for some people, especially those of us who are extreme Introverts. I have been known to say that I would prefer to go to the dentist for a root canal than to go to one more networking event. That was before I realized that I had the wrong attitude, however. Networking events don't have to be dreaded components of your job search strategy. Quite the contrary! You can adopt the attitude of one who has something interesting to offer, and you can set your mindset before you ever hit the door. Smile. Remind yourself that others there are feeling exactly like you do. Side up to the person in the room who looks as miserable as you might feel.

Start with an icebreaker. A client once suggested that he broke the ice with, "Do you hate these events as much as I do?" What a great way to break through the awkwardness and establish instant rapport with a total stranger! And don't feel like you have to meet everyone there, either. It is much better to

come away from any networking event with three or four cards from people you established a meaningful connection with and with whom you plan to follow up as opposed to collecting a dozen cards and then not knowing who was who or remembering why you might want to follow up. Your chances of actually following up with a dozen people also lessen as opposed to following up with three or four people.

4. Think of what you might be able to do for other people instead of going with the attitude that they must do something for you.

By focusing on the other people in the room and considering what you might offer them in the way of introductions or just making them feel more at ease, you take the pressure off yourself. I believe a lot of people show up at networking events feeling like they are wearing a big old “Loser” sign on their foreheads. Most networking events are for people who have been displaced or who don’t have jobs at the moment, and they feel like they are in need as opposed to having something constructive to offer. Changing this attitude only requires that you consider the proposition for why you are attending the event. You are there to meet people, yes, but you are there because you might find someone who you can help, and at the end of the day, there is no better feeling than that.

5. Follow up!

As I said earlier. If you aren’t going to follow up, don’t bother to go. Stay at home and try your luck at being one of the 20% of people who land jobs by applying online. The key to successful networking is in following up. Call the people that you connected with at the event and set up coffee with them. Meeting them one-on-one will help you both determine if there is anything you can do to help facilitate the other’s job search. You can commiserate over how your search is going if nothing else.

These are just five of many of the elements that go into creating a personal and professional brand which becomes part of the overall picture of how you present yourself to the world. You cannot afford

to ignore the fact that it is fundamentally true that you can do yourself a service, or you can do great harm to yourself if you don't heed this advice on how to show up at networking events.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/networking-event-best-brand-forward/>.

Personal Branding: The Secret to a Flawless Introduction

In the course of my work as a career coach and job search consultant, I meet new people all of the time. As a result, I have heard lots of “elevator speeches” and lots of personal introductions. In fact, I often start a typical conversation with the opener, “So, tell me about yourself,” just to see what the individual with whom I am meeting will say.

Related: [5 Things EVERY Brand Needs To Succeed](#)

My personal observation is that the individual who starts with his work history from 1983 is likely going to bore me before very long. I am too polite (I hope) to let it show, but when I ask that question, I am not interested in the person’s 20 or 30-year work history I know it may sound like I am, but that is not what I want to hear. I don’t intend it to be a trick question either. I find, however, that the way a person answers the question, “So, tell me about yourself,” is very telling, and may explain why they are still on the job market.

Here is what I want to hear when I ask that question, and I suspect your future employer would want to know this, too.

1. What’s your specialty?

In what area are you an expert, or, in other words, in what area are you a specialist? Instead of starting at the beginning of your work history, start with your most recent experience and work backward—but only as far back as is pertinent. Unless you want to see your listener glaze over in a few short minutes, you should start with your most pertinent and most recent work experience. Avoid starting with, “My first job was as a bagger at the local grocery store when I was 15 years old (and now I am 55).”

2. What are your credentials?

You can start with your credentials if they are relevant. For example, I have a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership, but I am no longer working directly in the field of education, so that isn't relevant anymore. If your credentials are pertinent, then by all means, start with them. For example, "I am a marketing specialist. I earned my MBA from ABC University. My last project was (fill in the blank) with Company XYZ."

3. What stories can back up your claims?

Tell a memorable story that demonstrates your experience or your expertise. We never get too old to hear a good story. You will be more memorable, and you will be on your way to making a lasting positive impression if you have a good story to tell that highlights your experience and showcases your professionalism in a particular way. You should practice your story, but don't let it sound rehearsed. That will bore your listener. Try to change it up just enough each time you tell it so that you can tell it enthusiastically, so you don't sound bored with yourself.

4. What's the other side of the story?

Avoid complaining about previous employers or work experiences. You may or may not already know this, but if you didn't already know it, here is a tip intended to help you: Nobody cares for a complainer. No offense, but as soon as someone starts telling me what a raw deal they got in their last job, I start wondering about the other side of the story. I am sure that were I to talk to the people at the previous job, they would tell the same story from their point of view. A potential employer will be turned off by even the hint of sour grapes, so be careful, and always, always, *always* be professional.

5. What about YOU?

Don't forget to ask about your listener if it is appropriate. If you are meeting someone over coffee for an informational conversation about a company you are interested in learning about, it would be helpful, not to mention just plain good manners, for you to ask a question or two of the person with whom you are meeting.

I have listened to people carry on about themselves for an hour or more without taking a breath. As we part ways, I note that they haven't asked a single question about me, so they don't know how I might help them. Not that I need to talk about myself, but it seems a little rude to take all of the time for yourself and not show at least a passing interest in the person with whom you are meeting.

The way you present yourself in these important conversations is the way you are building your personal and professional brand. I caution my clients to remember that they ARE their brand. You create your brand with every encounter regardless of how casual. You can create a lasting impression for good or not so good depending on your initial encounter with every new individual you meet. Build a brand that is memorable for the right reasons. Develop a strategy for how to introduce yourself. It will be an effort that pays off in the end.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/personal-branding-introduction-flawless/>.

Where Should You Be Promoting Your Personal Brand?

Everyone has a personal brand, but some people aren't sure how or where they are—or whether they should be—promoting it. Here are some places you can be promoting your personal brand on a regular basis.

Related: [Personal Branding: The Secret To A Flawless Introduction](#)

1. In-person networking.

Nothing trumps getting out of the house and attending networking events that allow you to shine and let people get to know people one-on-one. In spite of the fact that it is easy to sit at your computer and participate in social media through the multitude of available platforms, the best way to promote your personal brand is to get out of the house and network. The opportunities are limitless, but for many Introverts, the prospect of getting out and meeting people is daunting.

Nevertheless, the best way to promote your personal brand is to get out and meet people. Attend Meetup groups, Chamber of Commerce meetings, political rallies, alumni get-togethers, neighborhood parties, lunch meetings for people in your industry, and any other event that you can find to attend. Nothing beats meeting people in person. And be prepared to hand out business cards while you are at it (a bonus way of promoting your brand).

2. Optimize your LinkedIn profile.

Assuming that you are following the advice in #1, the next place to promote your personal brand is online, and the best way to create both a personal and a professional brand is to optimize your LinkedIn profile. Make sure you create a profile that presents the brand you want to present. Do you have a great

head shot? Is your headline filled with keywords that tell what you do as opposed to your job title?

Don't waste that space! Your headline should represent you in terms of the problem(s) you solve and the talent or expertise you can bring to a particular position. Determine the best way to present yourself and don't be afraid to tweak your headline as you refine your focus or evolve in your brand.

3. Use Twitter.

Twitter is another online platform that can be used to present your online brand and to promote yourself to a target market. If you are job hunting, follow companies that you think you might like to investigate as possible employers. If you are a hiring manager, connect with individuals who may bring value to your company. Twitter is an excellent forum for promoting yourself if you know how to do it and use it strategically. Be careful not to get caught up in the heat of the moment and Tweet something you might regret later. Twitter can be a double-edged sword in that regard, so utilize it but respect its power.

4. Write articles or posts to establish your brand.

LinkedIn allows users to post freely, so take advantage of that opportunity to showcase yourself and your brand. Additionally, write articles, essays, white papers, etc. and publish them yourself on your blog or your personal website, or offer your article to another medium...a magazine, a newspaper opinion piece, an article for a trade journal, etc. Get yourself established as an expert and write to share your unique thoughts, ideas, and insights.

5. Be consistent.

Regardless of the forum or format you choose or the strategy you select in promoting your personal brand, be consistent. Don't fill out your LinkedIn profile and then forget it. Log in at least every few days. Participate in Group Discussions. Network on a regular basis. The same advice goes for participating in

Twitter or writing or networking. Establishing your brand is not a “one and done” proposition.

Establishing your brand means being consistent in your efforts and being strategic in your approach.

Even though the concept of personal branding has been around for a while, I find that a lot of people fail to recognize that they already have a brand. Many people are unaware of the way they are showing up either in person or online. Every interaction, every email, every single thing you do throughout any given day whether it is on the job or during an evening out on the town is part of who you are and what your brand is. Those individuals who are most successful in the business world are acutely aware of the brand they have and the brand they want. You can always “re-brand” yourself if necessary, but it would be smarter for you to start off on the right foot and establish the brand you want and then tweak it as you grow and evolve.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/personal-brand-where-promoting/>.

tips

Tips to Make Your Personal Brand SHINE in a Cover Letter

Too many people make the mistake of thinking that the cover letter that goes with their résumé isn't all that important. You may have even heard that no one reads the cover letter, right? Whether that is an accurate statement or not, it doesn't serve as an invitation for you to overlook any opportunity to make a great impression on the potential reader of your cover letter. You want to make your personal brand shine, and the cover letter is an excellent place to start. Use these tips to help your brand SHINE when writing your next cover letter.

Related: [#1 Thing You MUST Say In Your Cover Letter](#)

1. Use the name of the person to whom you are writing, rather than the generic, "Dear Sir," "Dear Madam," or "To Whom It May Concern."

In today's world, there is simply no excuse for not taking the time to find the name of the person to whom you are addressing the cover letter. Don't know for sure? Then use the name of the Human Resources Director or the Hiring Manager. Is it a small company where there may not be an HR department? Then use the name of the Executive Director or the CEO. Regardless, and even if you get the name wrong, use a name. Failing to do so proves that you are either (A) lazy or (B) sloppy. Neither of those impressions will go very far in creating a good impression of you or your brand. Make your personal brand shine by going to whatever trouble it takes to get the name of a real person to whom you will address the cover letter.

2. The letter's format and its contents must be perfect.

Format the letter correctly and make sure it is error free. Have someone else proofread it for you to make sure that spelling errors, punctuation errors, spacing errors, and so on are not included in your cover letter. Any mistake is the kiss of death to your application and your dreams of ever working for the company to which you are applying. Your personal brand should demonstrate that you have a penchant

for impeccability and accuracy...so don't ruin it with a careless spelling or formatting error in the cover letter.

3. Keep it brief.

Your cover letter is a brief introduction of yourself to the reader. Don't overdo it by getting too wordy. Make it short enough but interesting enough that you leave the reader wanting to know more! Force them to look at your résumé for the details. Too often people mistakenly use their cover letter to regurgitate or repeat all of the pertinent points that are included in the résumé. If you are going to do that, save your time. Not only will the reader not read all of your cover letter, they probably won't read your résumé either.

4. Make it relevant to the job description.

Use a story or anecdote that conveys what you can offer the job that no one is likely able to duplicate. You may have to get creative, but do that instead of offering a boring, nondescript, "Please find enclosed my résumé where you will see that...." Make the cover letter about why you are applying for this position and why you are the best person for the job. Prove that you have an understanding of the job description and the job itself. Offer examples of experience in a similar job if you can. Be specific and be relevant. Your personal and professional brand relies upon your being able to convey that you understand the various aspects of the job for which you are applying.

5. Demonstrate your interest in *this* company and *this* job as opposed to just any company and any job.

Too often, and especially if you are looking at several jobs at once, you may decide to cut corners and make the cover letter sound more generic in tone than specific. Don't do it! Make your letter point out why you are particularly interested in working in this particular position and for this particular company. Otherwise, you miss your opportunity to demonstrate that you have researched the company (you have

researched the company, right?) and know that you have something special and of value to bring to them that no one else can match or duplicate.

Don't make the same mistakes that many people make when it comes to writing your next cover letter. Use your unique voice. Showcase your experience and expertise. Be specific but keep it brief, and make sure it doesn't resemble a résumé instead of a cover letter. These are just a few tips that will go a long way toward making your personal brand shine in your next cover letter.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/cover-letter-personal-brand-shine/>.

The 3 Biggest Personal Brand No-No's

Since becoming a Career Coach, I find myself frequently talking to my clients as well as groups about the importance of developing and establishing a “personal brand.” The concept is certainly not new. Tom Peters first introduced the idea that each of us represents a personal brand in an article entitled “The Brand Called You” that was published in August 1997, in Fast Company.

Related: [Personal Branding: The Secret To A Flawless Introduction](#)

We are certainly familiar with the idea of corporate branding. Whenever anyone talks about Google, Apple, Coca-Cola, and so on, we have a recollection, a remembrance or an impression of the company or its products. In some cases, we may have an emotional response of either pleasure or displeasure, depending upon our individual experiences with the company. We are perhaps less tuned in, however, to the significance—or the importance of—intentionally developing and establishing a personal brand. I warn my clients and audiences, however, that you ignore the power and importance of establishing a personal brand at your own peril.

The 3 biggest personal branding no-no's that I think most people commit on a regular basis are these:

1. Lacking in personal integrity.

When you interact with the people with whom you come into contact on a daily basis, the way you conduct yourself establishes who you are and ultimately what your brand is. Do you frequently show up at work behaving one way, interact with friends in another and treat those from whom you receive services (cashiers, waiters and waitresses, doormen, and so on) in yet another way? If you find yourself going out of your way to please superiors while you treat those you perceive to be “beneath you” with dismissiveness or rudeness, that is a demonstration of a lack of personal integrity (not to mention a lack of good manners).

Like it or not, that behavior is very much a part of your personal brand. How you “show up” and conduct yourself in every encounter both in person and virtually demonstrates who you are, and you need to take charge of your brand starting this second if you haven’t already. If you want a “good” brand, and you want others to be recommending you as someone that is wonderful, then you need to decide right now to embrace the importance of conducting yourself with complete integrity in every interaction every single chance you get.

2. Being chronically late.

We live in busy and hectic times, I know. Many of us feel a particular urgency around the whole issue of time and never feel that we have enough of it. I have noticed that in recent years, it is rare that any public event that I have attended starts on time because people show up late and interrupt the proceedings. As a result, the event starts 5 to 10 minutes late.

Being late all of the time is a sign of disrespect for those around you. If you have allowed yourself to indulge in the habit of being late much or most of the time, it is a part of your personal brand. People will note that you are never on time. Accordingly, people will judge your performance by your chronic tardiness. Break this bad habit immediately! It is better to be there a few minutes early and demonstrate your dependability than to be the person everyone always has to wait for before they can get started.

3. Lacking focus.

Do you ever have to wonder about what Apple is up to? Are they likely to come out with a new vacuum cleaner or coffee maker? No. Apple does electronics—and they have a reputation for doing electronics better than just about anyone else. Think about it. When you consider buying a new computer, you consider Apple or “PC.” “PC,” which is short for “personal computer” however, includes a whole bunch

of other brand names like Dell or Toshiba, and so on. There is only one Apple, even though they have several computers from which to choose. Why do you go to Wal-Mart? Because you can go there for the cheapest, least expensive stuff of just about any description. You would not go to Wal-Mart if you were looking to find an expensive, luxury item. You would go to Nordstrom or Neiman Marcus or a specialty store for that right?

The point is that just as companies and corporations have niche markets, you also need to decide on your niche and focus on what it is you want to do and for what do you want to be known. What is it that you want to accomplish? Where is it that you want to go? Who do you want to be and be known for as you proceed along your path?

I recently read an article in Careerealism.com by a colleague, Tracey Parsons who summed it up better than I could. She wrote that your personal brand is the “intersection of your reputation, your aspirations and who you are as a person and a professional.” I think that sums up perfectly what personal branding is all about, frankly. What is your reputation? How do people talk about you behind your back? Are you viewed as someone who is dependable, or are you the chronic latecomer? Do you treat people with respect regardless of who they are or you do reserve your respect and regard only for those you perceive to be in a position to promote you?

Your personal brand is how you show up on a day-to-day basis. Period. You may not be able to control how other people perceive you all of the time, but you have absolute control over how you present yourself. Show up looking like the professional you aspire to be. Make the decision to be dependable.

Make it your mission to take control of your personal brand starting today, and in the meantime, avoid these three no-no's so you don't ruin it before you have begun to build it.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/personal-branding-biggest-no-nos/>.

5 Things You MUST Do During Networking Events

Networking is right up there with going to the dentist for a root canal, isn't it? I have been known to say that the very word "networking" has the same visceral effect on me as the sound of fingernails dragging slowly down a blackboard. (That may be a reference that only those of a certain generation would find useful. If you have no idea to what I am referring to, [click here for a demonstration.](#))

RELATED: Need some networking advice? [Watch these LinkedIn tutorials!](#)

Networking has gotten a bad rap, and I would like to help dispel that right now. Networking can be—and should be—a positive experience. You just need to approach it with the right attitude and the proper mindset.

Here are five things that you should plan to accomplish at your next networking event.

1. Be the friendly, approachable person that everyone seeks to find at a networking event.

Approach the event less like the dreaded sixth-grade dance. View the event as an opportunity to make a potential new friend. Too often—especially those of us who cop to the idea that being an introvert is the reason we hate networking—approach networking events with a sense of dread. We think that everyone else finds it easy and that we are the only ones who hate it, but that is simply not the case. It may be helpful for you to know that about half of the people in the room are introverts just like you given that that is how the population breaks down. That means that there are a lot of people in the room who are looking for a friendly face to talk to, and there is no reason that friendly face can't be yours.

2. Make up your mind going in that don't need to try to meet *everyone*.

You don't need to look (or be) schizophrenic. Decide to strike up 3-5 quality conversations over the course of a 2-hour event, if you have that much time. Offer your card (be sure to have plenty of cards,

by the way) and ask them for theirs and ask about what they do instead of going straight into your elevator pitch. Give the other person a chance to talk first. Then, they will feel more comfortable and will want to reciprocate by listening to what you do or what you are looking for when they finish.

3. Look your best, and you will feel more confident.

Take the time before every event to dress for success and then go in with a feeling of confidence and competence. If you can't feel the confidence, then fake it. Others are going to be nervous and tentative, too. If you look great and act like you know what you are doing, people are likely to gravitate to you. Don't forget to smile and be friendly. Strike up conversations with strangers by complimenting them on something they are wearing.

Guys, don't get creepy about it, but it's okay to compliment a woman on a brooch or scarf that she is wearing. Ladies, it's okay to say, "I like that tie" to the men. Let the conversation flow naturally from there. Just remember to keep it light and professional. You are not there to get a date. You are there to get a *job*.

4. Have a notebook handy so that you can take notes if needed, and listen attentively.

Perhaps you know someone to whom you could offer an introduction. Wouldn't that be awesome!

Making introductions is as important as having others offer introductions to you. Helping others is what networking is about, and there is no rule that says you always have to go with the feeling that you are arriving hat in hand looking for someone to do something for you. It is a powerful and empowering feeling if you approach the event with the idea that you might be able to offer help to someone else.

5. Follow up after the event.

Don't just collect business cards for the sake of collecting business cards. Call to make a date for coffee. E-mail the person letting them know you enjoyed your conversation with them. Don't let the two hours you just spent meeting 3-5 new people go to waste because you are too "busy" or too shy to follow up. Make your conversations of the type and quality that getting back with the person and setting up a coffee or lunch date makes sense for both of you. Even if the individual in question doesn't have a job for you, he/she might know someone who knows someone who knows someone. That's why it is called networking.

Now get out there and network with power and purpose and meaning. You will enjoy it a lot more, and it will be a lot more productive for you and your job search.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/networking-events-things-must-do/>.

6 tips to Make Your Résumé Better than the Rest

Recruiters look at dozens of résumés a day. If they see something they don't like, your résumé could wind up in the "no" pile in just seconds. Here are a few tips to help make sure that your résumé will stand out from all of the other people applying for the same job.

Related: [5 Tips To Make Your Résumé Stand Out](#)

1. Make sure your résumé is error-free.

I know that sounds like a no-brainer, but you might be surprised at the number of résumés that I review for clients who have a spacing issue, a punctuation error, or even a misspelling. The problem is that you have looked at your résumé so many times, your brain knows what it is supposed to say, but in reality, it says something else. Get several people to proofread your résumé, and have them read it for different purposes. One person should read for grammar, for example, and another should read for punctuation and spelling. You cannot afford to send a résumé that has any error at all in it. I have heard former HR directors admit that they scan résumés for errors because they are looking for ways to eliminate potential candidates. Any superficial error will eliminate your chances of getting a call for that job.

2. Make sure that your résumé is in alignment with the job description of the job for which you are applying.

Too often people think that their résumé is a "once and done" proposition. Not so! You should customize your résumé for every job each time you apply. Match up keywords from the job description with keywords in your résumé. Make sure that your achievements and successes indicate that you are an excellent candidate for the job for which you are applying. You need to tweak your résumé for every single job posting.

3. Make your résumé sleek.

Some people think that the trick to a great résumé is to stuff as many accomplishments as possible into it by using tiny font and stretching the margins to the limit. The result is a résumé that is difficult to read and looks cluttered and clunky. Those résumés will wind up in the “no” pile because the person in charge doesn’t have a magnifying glass handy and doesn’t care enough to try to ferret out the pertinent information. Your résumé should have a clean and contemporary look and feel. Use lots of white space by maximizing margins and being as concise as possible. Also, use fonts that are clean looking like Calibri or Arial.

4. Use keywords strategically.

Check the job description carefully for each job for which you are applying, and use keywords in your résumé that match keywords in the job description. Use a free resource like Wordle.net to help you identify the keywords that are used most frequently in the job description, and then use those keywords throughout your résumé. The people who are recruiting or hiring are looking for individuals who are a good match for the job opening that they have. Don’t make them guess whether or not you have the required experience or skills. Make it easy for them to consider you a good match.

5. Describe accomplishments, not responsibilities.

Avoid using the word “responsible” in your résumé. Instead, concentrate on specific and verifiable accomplishments. For example, which sounds more specific (and impressive):

- “Responsible for manufacturing production with proven record of exceeding expectations.” Or
- Project Manager – Managed five different teams over the course of 10+ years resulting in \$50 million in new sales along with a 30% reduction in waste.

6. Use “power” words.

Demonstrate that you are a person of action. Rather than being “responsible for,” something, use words like “advised,” “led,” “launched,” “executed,” “generated,” “planned,” “produced,” etc. These words (and others like them) demonstrate your ability to perform on the job and your specific role in previous jobs. Strong action words validate your capabilities and specific duties you have performed. Consider which is better:

- Responsible for launch of a new product.
- Initiated and led new product-launch that resulted in \$20 million in revenue.

Don’t forget that your résumé is your document, and it represents you, who you are and what you can do when you can’t be there in person to explain all of that to a recruiter or hiring manager. Your résumé is just one of hundreds that fly into any given company on any given day. You need to stand out from the crowd, and it is your responsibility to make your résumé stand out.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/résumé-better-than-rest/>.

3 Signs Your Interview Isn't Going in the Right Direction

Interviewing is nerve wracking even in the best of circumstances. If you feel like you are under a microscope, it is because you are! The interviewer or interview panel is looking for chinks in your proverbial armor. They want to make sure that you can do the job, but just as importantly, they want to determine if you can fit in with their team. Likeability is an intangible component of your interview, so how do you ensure that you come across as likeable as well as competent?

Related: [What To Do When Your Interview Isn't Going Well](#)

The fact is that there is no magic formula. Your best bet is to prepare for the interview as well as you can, put your best foot forward, and then do the best you can. If the interview doesn't seem to go well, you can try to pivot a little, but sometimes there is nothing you can do. If the interviewer has already made up his mind to go with another candidate and he is just going through the motions by interviewing you, that isn't on you. It happens, however, and it happens perhaps more than you even know. Here are three signs that your interview isn't going well. You need to be aware of what is going on *during* the interview so that you can try to adjust to the extent that you can. Signs that the interview isn't going well include the following:

Interviewers don't react the way you expect them to when you tell your stories of success.

You may have a story of a success that in the past has gotten nods of approval or smiles from your interviewer(s). If you tell the same story with the same zest, and you don't get the same or similar reaction, it may mean that they aren't listening, or they didn't get the point of the story or missed the import of the success. It could be a sign that you have failed to connect with the interviewer(s) from the start, and they aren't as attentive as you need them to be to get why you are the best-qualified candidate.

Interviewer(s) seem bored and distracted.

If the interviewer or individual panelist keep looking at their phone or computer screen, they may be displaying their lack of interest in what you have to say, or they may just be distracted by something that is going on that is taking precedence over your interview. Perhaps they are monitoring an emergency situation, but they can't or don't share that with you. Or perhaps they have just decided that they aren't going to hire you, so nothing you say will make a difference. Again, they are just going through the motions. Without being rude yourself, there is little you can do to get them to pay attention to you unless you manage to get their attention with a witty remark or a humorous story. Everyone usually responds to humor if it is well delivered and natural. Not everyone can pull that off, however, and it is especially challenging if you are nervous as you will likely be in an interview.

They don't tell you about next steps or ask if you have questions for them.

As you wind up the interview, and if it has gone very badly, that may be sooner rather than later, they won't ask if you have any questions for them, and they won't offer what the next steps will be. If you ask and they seem vague or reluctant to tell you by when they expect to fill the job, that is another sign that you probably aren't going to be considered as one of the finalists.

Sometimes circumstances are just out of your control, and there is nothing you can do to save an interview that isn't going well. As a post interview exercise, you should consider from hello to goodbye how you believe you performed and what the reactions of your interviewer(s) were. Did you fail to prepare properly? Did you practice well enough beforehand that you were able to contain your nerves? Were you prepared with the right kind of answers to the questions you were asked? Were you concise in your responses or did you ramble? Did you keep to the issue of your ability to do the job or did you veer off into the personal and wind up sharing too much?

Sometimes candidates do themselves no favor by volunteering information that winds up hurting them more than helping. In mock interviews, I have had people start out by telling me why they were fired from their last job. I may want to know more about that later after I am interested in your qualifications, but starting off on that note can be dangerous. The same goes with telling too much about what is going on in your personal life. If you are going through a divorce or just broke up from a long term relationship, that is important to you, but not so much to the person considering hiring you. Be careful about oversharing.

If the interview has obviously gone bad and you are pretty sure you aren't going to receive an offer, chalk it up to good experience and move on. **Learn from the experience.** There are two pitfalls you should avoid moving forward, however. Avoid blaming the entire situation on the interviewer(s). Perhaps you could have done something to engage their interest and change their minds about you during the interview, so don't put it *all* off on them. Take some responsibility for your performance and try to figure out how you can improve it moving forward. The second thing to avoid is to take on so much blame that you stop applying for jobs to avoid future interviews. That is a no-win attitude. Learn from your mistakes, adjust your approach if necessary, and move on. Perhaps that job wasn't the best one for you anyway. Maybe not getting *that* job is a good thing. It frees you up for a better opportunity which may be just around the corner. Learn from your experiences and move on.

Interviews are a necessary part of just about every job search. I say "just about" because I have heard of people who landed a job *without* a formal interview. Those instances are the rare exception. Given that interviews go with the job search process, wouldn't it be better to learn how to interview effectively instead of treating it like a dreaded exercise routine that you keep putting off until it is too late to

prepare properly? Learn how to prepare. Learn how to handle your nerves. Practice with a friend or a coach until you hone the answers to the questions you are sure to be asked, and you can deliver them with confidence. Nothing replaces appropriate preparation, so do the work and see the results pay off.

This article is available is online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/signs-interview-isnt-going-right-direction/>.

5 Ways to Make the Right Impression in a Group Interview

When I was President of the Virginia Education Association (2008-2012), I often sat on the side of the table with individuals who were responsible for bringing new people into our organization. We took that responsibility very seriously. Making the wrong choice is expensive not to mention heart-wrenching for all parties concerned. We couldn't always avoid making mistakes, but there were certain attributes and characteristics that made some candidates stand out and shine compared to their counterparts convincing us to take a chance on them.

Here are 5 ways that you can make the right impression and stand out in a group interview.

Related: [4 A's For Acing The Group Interview](#)

1. Demonstrate that you have done your homework on the job and the organization/company.

More often than not, if a candidate failed to show that he or she had done their due diligence and knew more than the passing person on the street about who we were, what our values were, and what our mission was, they were eliminated early. I can clearly recall one individual who was the perfect candidate for the open position on paper—but he blew the interview because he had failed to research us so that he could speak plainly to the challenges we were facing. Failing to do your homework on the company or organization and the position for which you are applying is unacceptable.

Want to make the right impression? Know the names of the decision makers in the company.

Understand the job beyond the job description. Demonstrate that you have taken more than the 30-minutes before the interview to learn about the company or organization, and you know what it does along with what it values. That extra effort will make the right impression on the members of the group who are sitting before you.

2. Dress the part.

I am an admitted a bit of a fuddy-duddy about appearance, so it will come as no surprise that I think we live in a day of casual attire that has run amok completely. Don't fall into the false trap of feeling that you should show up for your interview the way you might be expected to dress for the job. Gentlemen, please wear a clean suit or nice dress trousers with a conservative blue blazer. Your tie should be understated, and your shirt should be clean, crisp, and either white or light blue. You can dress with flair after you get the job, not before.

As for ladies, wear a suit or nice dress that isn't too short and doesn't have a low neckline. Pumps are optional, but shoes should be well polished and not overly worn. Open toes and sandals are not recommended. Stockings may be optional depending on the time of year, but I would recommend that you err on the side of caution and wear them. Makeup and hair should be done but not over-done, and the same goes for jewelry. Got a nose ring? Leave it off for the interview unless you are applying for a job where such an accessory would be an asset...and you know what that might be, I suspect.

Understated and professional, however, is the look I would recommend for most junior executive positions or even entry level business openings in a more traditional company.

3. Arrive on time with the right materials in hand.

Being late is not acceptable. Don't know where you are going? Then go early and find the building. If you get there an hour early, then go to a Starbucks or local eatery to hang out and prepare a little more.

Don't arrive for the interview itself any earlier than 10-15 minutes. Be prepared to wait. There may be others ahead of you, and the panel may be running behind. The materials you should bring with you

include extra hard copies of your résumé on nice paper, business cards, and a portfolio carrying a legal pad upon which to write notes as you need to.

Bring your questions written out, as well, for later in the interview. Otherwise, you run the risk of forgetting the questions and wishing you had written them down. If you are asked to prepare a presentation, make sure ahead of time that all of the equipment you might need for it will be available. Don't assume anything. Ask to make sure that you will have what you need to make your presentation shine.

4. Demonstrate good manners and excellent interpersonal and social skills throughout the interview from the moment you walk in the door until you leave.

Social grace is something you may need to practice, but you cannot afford to underestimate its value when you are in an interview, especially when it is a group interview. In a group or panel interview, you are trying to impress anywhere from 4 to 10 or 12 different people who will have different expectations and will be looking for various things. You need to handle the pressure with as much poise and grace as possible. Look everyone in the eye but use eye contact appropriately. Being too intense can be off-putting as much as letting your eyes flit all over the room and above the heads of the members of the panel.

The same goes for an appropriately firm handshake. Practice if you aren't sure about the quality of your handshake. Use the pressure you would use on a doorknob of a closed door. Grip slightly, but not too hard. Release and move on. Shake the hand of every person—man and woman—in the room. Make eye contact while shaking their hand. If you are good with names, try to remember them as they are introduced to you. If not, don't fret. They really won't expect you to remember all of them, especially if it is a large group. You do want to remember the names of the most prominent leaders in the group,

however. While answering individual questions, don't just look at the person who asked the question (although you want to look at them while they are asking it), but look at each member of the group around the table while you answer the question.

5. Be prepared to ask quality questions at the end.

Believe it or not, it isn't just the questions that you answer that are important in your job interview, but it is also the quality of the questions that you ask that can separate you from the pack. Demonstrate that you have done your research, and you understand exactly what the job entails...or ask about parts of the job description that you aren't quite sure about...to show that you are a cut above the average candidate. From back in my days as a member of the interview panel, we were always most impressed with the candidates who asked us excellent questions, and that does not include when are vacations and what is the salary range. Questions about the more challenging aspects of the job or what qualities or characteristics a successful candidate would need to demonstrate to be successful in the job are the types of questions that will make you different. Those questions demonstrated that we were talking with someone who had done their homework.

Group interviews are hard on you because they can be nerve racking. You will feel that you are juggling many balls in the air at once, and the truth is, you are. Some jobs require them, however, so you need to learn how to manage your nerves—and your social skills—during a group interview. You want to leave a lasting impression, after all, and you want to make sure that it is a good one.

This article is available online at <https://www.workitdaily.com/group-interview-make-right-impression/>.

Conclusion

The purpose of this guide has been to help demystify some of the various aspects of the job search process. There are, in fact, a lot of moving parts to every job search, and that is why I don't recommend that you attempt to job search alone. Too many things can (and will) fall through the cracks if you try to juggle all of these various components of your job search by yourself.

Starting with deciding what it is you want to do, writing a compelling résumé that will present you as a viable candidate for the position, writing a cover letter that someone will read instead of just tossing it in the trash, making sure your LinkedIn profile is ready for "prime time," and preparing for interviews which are always nerve-wracking...these are just some of the components of the typical job search.

I have provided a lot of information here, and I hope you will find it useful as you prepare to job hunt or change careers. **My primary concern is your success as a job seeker.** I want you to find the job of your dreams! You deserve that, don't you? Don't settle for just any old job when you could be positioning yourself for a career that will use your talents and natural gifts, and where you will be appreciated for the hard work and effort you put forth.

Don't be a member of the 70% of Americans who hate their jobs or are disengaged in them. Don't be part of the 87% who say they don't love their work. Be in the *minority* by finding work that is fulfilling and fills you up instead of making you feel used up.

And if I can help, please do not hesitate to let me know. You may contact me at kittyboitnott@boitnottcoaching.com. You may check out my websites, too. One of them is called Teachers in Transition, and you can find it here: <http://teachersintransition.com>. The other website is called Kitty at Career Makeover. Coaches Console...and it can be located at <http://kittyatcareermakeover.coachesconsole.com>.

Please feel free to like my Facebook page at <http://facebook.com/boitnottcoachingllc>, and follow me on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/kittyboitnott>. I would also love it if you would connect with me on LinkedIn at <http://linkedin.com/in/kittyboitnott>...just include a customized note telling me why you would like to connect. (It will be good practice for you.)

Thank you for taking the time to read this little guide which has been dedicated to **all teachers everywhere who go to work every day hoping to make some child's life better.**

It is also dedicated to those individuals from the corporate world who have hit the point of burnout and need to know that there is hope for them to find something else that can be just as fulfilling and perhaps a lot more fun.

There IS hope. You just have to take that first step toward the future you want and deserve.

Get started today.



For more information or for help in jumpstarting your own job search, contact Kitty Boitnott, Ph.D., NBCT, RScP for information about her signature program, [Jumpstart Your Job Search Program](#).

Contact Kitty at kittyboitnott@boitnottcoaching.com or 804-404-5475.



[Click here for details on the Jumpstart Your Job Search Program.](#)