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Job Hunting Tips #6 Assessing Your Personal Value

By Virginia Bola, PsyD

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A week out of work is a vacation. You can sleep late in the morning, revel in your newly found free time, shop when the stores are empty, and get around to those chores you have been putting off for too long.

Three weeks out of work and you are still relaxed. There is a new and better position waiting out there and you just need to get around to finding it.

Six weeks out of work and you are getting anxious. Fifty resumes have vanished into a black hole and the telephone refuses to ring.

Twelve weeks out of work and panic starts to set in. You review your recent efforts to find work and seem to be doing all the right things. You start to doubt yourself: Am I too old? Are my skills outdated? Are the industries I know all dying? Are there any decent jobs out there? Is there something wrong with me? Does nobody need me?

Take a deep breath and remind yourself that no matter what optimistic spin the government trumpets, it is tough to find a good job when new job seekers exceed the number of jobs created. A 5 to 6 percent unemployment rate means that every job which arises has potentially eight million applicants! Then sit down and look at yourself from a new perspective.

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1. You have the personal qualities employers are seeking, such as persistence, loyalty, energy, independence, enthusiasm, responsibility, punctuality, maturity, empathy, flexibility, sincerity, and tolerance.
2. You have general job skills which work in any industry: negotiating, inventiveness, sensitivity, understanding, creativity, the ability to write clearly, assemble things, or operate machinery and experience in computing, classifying, investigating, evaluating, or synthesizing data.
3. You have specific job skills which have been acquired in all of your previous work experience.
4. You have multiple layers of value as a significant other, a parent, a brother or sister, a child, a friend, a community worker.

List out each area as a reminder that not finding a job does not mean that you are worthless. Reread the list several times a week, keep adding to it as you remember skills, read it before every interview or employer contact.

The world may not seem to need you right now but it is important that you know your own worth and stop buying into that sense of incompetency and despair that prolonged unemployment (caused by economic and political forces, not by you personally) can produce.

Dr. Bola operated a rehabilitation company, developing innovative job search techniques for disabled workers, for 20 years. A licensed clinical psychologist, she directed vocational programs for the mentally ill, served as a Vocational Expert in administrative and civil court, and pioneered vocational testimony in Workers' Compensation. Author of *The Wolf at the Door: An Unemployment Survival Manual*, she can be found at: <http://www.virginiabola.com>

From The WorkWise Collection: Job Hunting in the New Economy

By Mary Jeanne Vincent

To succeed in today's global marketplace, companies must hire the best and the brightest. Having talented employees can make the difference between success and failure.

Job Hunting Tips #6 Assessing Your Personal Value

Job hunting in this new economy is competitive, dynamic, results-driven, and requires your best efforts. In the past, jobs and careers were permanent, stable, and predictable. Today all of that has changed. Jobs, careers, and the world of work are transient, unpredictable, and involve risk. If you want to be successful, you have to take smart risks, know the rules, and play by them.

To set yourself apart from the competition, follow these job-hunting tips for the new economy:

1. Know what you have to offer. What are you selling? What specific skills, experience, and knowledge do you bring with you? The question employers want answered is: "What can you do for my organization?"
2. Create solid marketing materials and package them well. Does your résumé present specific accomplishments, complete with results that demonstrate what you can do for a potential employer? If not, why not? Is it clean, neat, and easy to read?
3. Make it easy for employers to hire you. Think about a variety of options that could work for you and the employer. Keep an open mind about when, where, and how the work could be done. Cutting off the discussion too early can result in lost opportunities. Whereas maintaining an ongoing conversation can lead to innovative solutions that suit both parties.
4. Take the initiative in selling your services. Let people know what you have to offer. Give employers a reason to talk with you; they need to know the benefits that hiring you will provide them. Be prepared to offer that information, even if they don't ask for it.
5. Think about the employer's needs, not your agenda. Never mind your agenda (getting a job), think about their agenda (solving a problem). What problem are they trying to solve? Describe how you can help. Then follow up, follow up, follow up.

Apply these job hunting tips and you are sure to set yourself apart from the competition, shorten your job search, and find the work you love!

Hi, I'm Mary Jeanne Vincent. I help real job seekers just like you find jobs that meet the triple-F test: work that's fun, fulfilling, and financially rewarding. Ask about WorkWise Words of Wisdom Uncover Your Passion tip cards—50 easy-to-use tips guaranteed to jumpstart the process of finding the work

you love and loving the work you do. Only \$24.99! For information, write to:

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