

Lost your job? Practical dos and don'ts for landing a new one

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JUST BEEN LAID OFF?

In the wake of widespread layoffs, the best advice is get over your job loss pronto and get your career back on track, asserts Richard S. and Terri A. Deems, authors of *Make Job Loss Work for You* (Jist).

They offer some practical job-hunting dos and don'ts. First the dos:

KEEP FINANCES IN ORDER

Job-hunters must deal with many unknowns, the biggest of which is trying to estimate how long it will take to land a new job. Statistics say that the higher the salary on a prior job, the longer it takes to find a comparable position. Thinking pragmatically, it could take two to three months to find another job – maybe longer. Even if funds are socked away for emergencies, cut back and spend prudently.

GET ORGANIZED

Set up a home office so that the job search can be managed comfortably. It could be a room, a portion of a room, even a ventilated closet that can act as a makeshift office. This is the place to stow records, computer, phone and job-hunting paraphernalia.

KEEP IN SHAPE

Job-hunting isn't fun. The process can be tedious, monotonous and boring. They'll be good and bad days. There will also be depressing days when nothing goes right, which is all the more reason to set aside a certain amount of time every day, say 30-45 minutes, to exercise. Jog, swim or take a long walk. Pick an enjoyable exercise that works off stress and excess energy. The result is a fit body and an alert mind.

CREATE A SCHEDULE

And live by it. It's very easy to slip into bad habits when jobless. Most people need disciplined work schedules. Working alone isn't easy for some. As difficult as it is to set schedules and stick by them, it's critical for efficient job hunting.

Build a proactive job-hunting strategy.

Don't sell yourself short.

Don't badmouth previous employers or co-workers.

Don't wait for employers to contact you.

PURSUE SEVERAL JOB-SOURCE AVENUES

But only pursue venues that lead to your desired position. They ought to include niche job sites, social networking sites, daily newspapers and trade/professional publications. Each one ought to be compulsively monitored.

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES IN LARGE AND SMALL ORGANIZATIONS

The Deems wrote that "most job openings today are in small companies." They're wrong. Good or bad times, large organizations never stop hiring. Typically, the hiring process is longer and more bureaucratic than it is in smaller companies. A well-run job-search campaign ought to include a cross-section of companies of all sizes.

SET ASIDE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF HOURS EACH DAY FOR JOB HUNTING

Many career consultants advise going at job-hunting eight hours a day. The number of hours isn't as important as what's accomplished during that period. Quality is more important than quantity. Many people can accomplish in five hours what others accomplish in eight. Based upon personal rhythms, set a productive work schedule and live by it.

HERE ARE A FEW DON'TS

- Don't sell yourself short. A normal initial reaction to job loss is personal defeat. Even if you fall into that trap, get out of it fast. The authors' advice: "Just because you lost your job doesn't mean you don't have something to offer, or that you have to take just anything in order to keep on working."
- Don't badmouth previous employers or co-workers. It's very tempting to be honest and tell prospective employers the real reasons for being laid off or fired. But this is not the place for honesty. Prospective employers are not interested. It's bad form. If you're leaving because you had a daemonic boss or had difficulty with co-workers, find a plausible positive reason for seeking greener pastures. An evergreen reason is greater advancement and training options – an opportunity to "move up the ladder and take on more responsibilities." These are solid irrefutable reasons for changing jobs.
- Build a proactive job-hunting strategy. Don't wait for employers to contact you, the Deems advise. Some will contact you, others will not. "If certain people are important to you, take the initiative yourself," they suggest.

Source: Troy Media

Third quarter numbers:

Productivity, compensation, and unit labour cost

THE LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY of Canadian businesses fell 0.2% in the third quarter, after fluctuating between increases and declines of 0.1% since the second quarter of 2008.

In each of the preceding five quarters, real gross domestic product (GDP) and hours worked declined in tandem, and as a result, there was very little change in productivity during that period.

The real GDP of businesses edged down 0.1% in the third quarter, following sharp quarterly declines in the previous three quarters.

Hours worked (+0.2%) were up in the third quarter for the first time since the first quarter of 2008. Employment and hours worked per job both grew by 0.1%.

The decline in overall business productivity was mainly a result of the goods-producing

business sector, which fell 0.9% in the third quarter following a 0.8% drop in the second quarter. Nonetheless, productivity in manufacturing recorded a second consecutive quarterly gain. Meanwhile, productivity in services-producing businesses (+0.2%) continued to climb, though at a much slower pace than in the previous quarter.

Labour costs per unit of production in Canadian dollars edged down 0.1% for Canadian businesses in the third quarter, the first drop since the first quarter of 2002, when it also declined 0.1%. This decrease follows advances of 0.1% in the second quarter and 0.8% in the first quarter of 2009.

The value of the Canadian dollar in relation to its American counterpart rose 6.3% in the third quarter, roughly the same appreciation

as in the second quarter (+6.7%). The third quarter appreciation of the Canadian dollar was reflected in a 6.3% advance in the unit labour costs of Canadian businesses in American dollars, a second consecutive quarterly increase.

By comparison, American businesses' unit labour costs, which have not risen since the beginning of 2009, shrank by 0.6% in the third quarter.

The labour productivity figures for the third quarter of 2009, released on December 15th, were revised back to the first quarter of 2009 at the aggregate level and to the first quarter of 2004 at the industry level.

Source: Statistics Canada