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IN SIGHT for Oregon Lawyers and Judges

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

TRAINING TIPS FOR THE JOB SEARCH MARATHON

Looking for a job can be extremely stressful, particularly if you've been unemployed or underemployed for a while and have minimal income, depleted savings, a lot of debt, or all of the above. A lack of results from your efforts can take a toll on your confidence, making you feel less and less like taking more action – at precisely the time when you need to maintain both optimism and a productive search.

Career experts suggest that today's job seekers prepare themselves for a marathon, not a sprint. Here are some tips to help you go the distance.

Choose a Course

- Make sure you are looking for jobs that fit your goals. A continued lack of offers can bring about frenzied reactions, like applying for any position you see without considering whether the job matches your skills, interests, and qualifications.

- Think in terms of small steps you can take toward your goal. It will seem less daunting and more achievable.

- Use this time to discover new possibilities and opportunities you might not otherwise have considered.

Stick to a Schedule

- Write out your job search strategy. Create a spreadsheet to keep track of contacts and follow-up.

- Keep to a routine. Make a list of professional tasks to accomplish each day so that you are more likely to use your time productively.

- Get out of the house every day

and spend time among people, even if you just go to your local coffee shop.

Check Your Technique

- Pay careful attention to your documents. Your résumé and cover letter are central to making an effective first impression on a potential employer. Be sure your documents showcase your qualifications.

- Concentrate on making and developing connections and building relationships. The more people you interact with, the higher your chances of landing a job through your contacts.

- Use your time well; keep your skills fresh; position yourself so that when jobs open up, people think of you.

Seek Support

- Surround yourself with a support system, and choose to interact with positive-minded people.

- Connect with others who are also job seeking – it helps to alleviate isolation.

- Have those who know you well reflect to you what they see as your strengths, skills, achievements, and potentially overlooked opportunities.

- Don't be afraid to reach out to people. Other lawyers are often willing to help if approached appropriately. But you must take the initiative. Let people know what you're up to and how they can help.

- Seek guidance from a mentor or advisor to help you move forward. Look for people who will support you and who will also hold you accountable for the actions you want to take.

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Stay the Healthy Course

- Identify your minimum daily requirement for self-care to stay on track. Do what you know is good for you so you can be at your best when meeting people.

- Examine your habits. Are they working for you or hampering you? Do they restore you, or just mask the pain temporarily, such as too much television, food, shopping, surfing the Web, or alcohol?

- Practice resiliency. Rejection is a part of life and most job searches. It's natural to feel dejected at first, but if you accept rejection as part of the process and do not take it personally, you will stay healthy and in the "race" longer.

Reexamine Your Course

- Be willing to try new things and change how you approach the market and your job search.

- Periodically assess your goals. Will your current course help you to reach your destination? You may need to correct your course from time to time.

Clear the Roadblocks

- Question your assumptions about finding a job. Here are some common assumptions people make that are frequently not true:

- ▶ I will never get a job in this economy.
- ▶ I am too old to get a job.
- ▶ I don't have enough experience.
- ▶ I have too much experience.
- ▶ I won't get hired because I was fired from my last job.

- Let go of any resentment you have about your situation. It's hard to see possibility when you are stuck in the past. Acceptance will allow you to move forward with your life.

- Write down things you believe are not in your control – this can actually decrease anxiety. Then write down what you think you might be able to do about those things. Focus on what you can control.

- Allow room in your life for inspiration. Give yourself permission to dream.

- Reflect on past successes and accomplishments. List all the things you are proud of and milestones you have reached. Keep in perspective that this is a small period in your lifetime.

It may take longer in this economy to find a job than you had hoped or planned, but many good resources are available to you. For additional information, see the sidebar to this article.

This article was written by In Sight editor Tanya Hanson, using the following sources: JobsJournal.com, a weekly online career bulletin; Job Search 2010, an OAAP CLE (see Resources box); and Staying Positive in a Down Economy: Beyond the "Group Hug," an ABA audio download.

Resources for Your Job Search

- OAAP CLE – Job Search 2010 (to order, go to www.osbplf.org and click on Programs on CD/DVD under Loss Prevention).
- OAAP Attorney Counselors – 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227.
- Lawyers in Transition – Weekly networking, educational, and support group, plus a monthly featured speaker (see page 8 for more information).