

Job Search Resilience: It's About How You Perceive Things

For many people, the complex process of searching for a job can be a very difficult and challenging stressor. It can include a series of polarizing events that culminate into feelings of defenselessness, isolation and fatigue.

But – that's if you let it. You can't choose the challenges or setbacks in your job search, but you can control how you react to them. Landing a job can be a life-changing event, and the journey throughout the process can make more of an impact on who you are than you ever imagined.

Looking for a new position can take longer and be more grueling than what you may originally anticipate. The ups and downs, hits and misses can get you going in the wrong direction or even make you want to stop moving in any direction.

So what keeps us on track? **Resiliency** is what allows you to continue. It's the inner desire that says you are not a failure but rather are an overcomer. Resiliency allows you to move past the roadblocks and is where character and drive come from. It keeps you moving when you don't want to and keeps you on the lookout for what is ahead, what is better, and what feels like the right fit. It allows you to fail and learn, all the while keeping the belief in the big picture and focus on what you are doing.

In order to build up job search resiliency, consider practicing the following steps:

- 1) **Take care of yourself.** Eat well, get plenty of sleep and rest, and exercise regularly. Take breaks from your search to clear your mind and refocus with a new, enlightened attitude.
- 2) **Keep trying.** Don't give up – stay the course and stay positive. There will be good days and bad days, days with calls for interviews and days without calls. Keep all your options open – there is a job for you, but it can only be found when you keep searching. Consider taking a career, skills or strengths assessment – such as those on MyFSET.net or the StrengthsFinder assessment – to further expand your options by focusing on your strengths and jobs you may have not previously considered.
- 3) **Don't take rejection personally.** During a job search, it is easy to beat yourself up and think “*if I only...*” Often, rejection it is not about you personally but rather about the specific business needs of the organization.
- 4) **Have a support network.** Turn to others – family, friends and various programs, such as the NorthCentral Programs – for pep talks, distractions, and feedback on your job search materials such as cover letter, resume, and interviewing style.

- 5) **Ask for professional feedback.** Find out from the employer you applied with why they are not pursuing you further. This type of feedback will not only help you become more self-aware but will also prepare you for the next steps in your search.

- 6) **Focus on what you have** and not what you don't have. Every situation can be a game changer. You may gain stronger interview skills or learn how to better word a tricky departure from a company on a job application. Each opportunity can provide you with more knowledge, skills and connections.

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