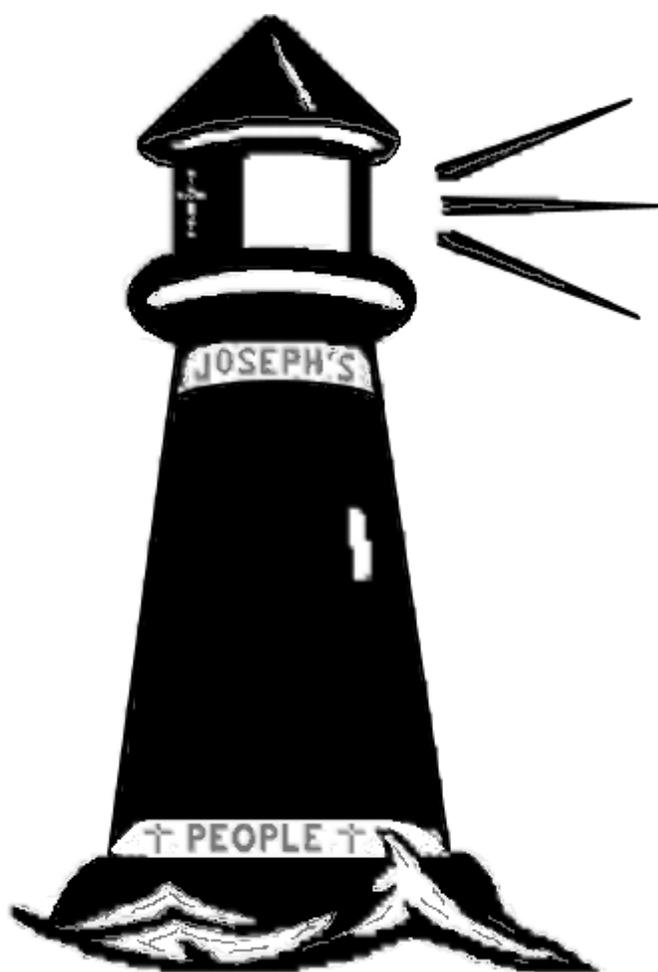


My Journey

A Guide to Finding a New Life



This publication was designed by, authored by, and is the sole property of,
Joseph's People, Ltd., 332 Manor Avenue, Downingtown, PA 19335

www.josephspeople.org

Help Line: 610-873-7117

Copyright 2019 All rights are reserved. Version 052519

Joseph's People, Ltd.
Founded 1995

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Leadership Committee of Joseph's People, inspired by the example of St. Joseph the Worker and supported by our spiritual community, are dedicated and committed to offering support, guidance, and job counseling services to the people of our community who are unemployed or are seeking full employment. We do so without regard to the religious affiliation or lack of religious affiliation of those seeking our help. We are a faith based ecumenical mission.

Support

We pledge to provide our membership, to the best of our ability, with spiritual and emotional support, financial guidance, and friendship throughout their period of unemployment.

Guidance

We pledge to provide our membership with the tools and resources necessary to pursue an effective and successful job search.

Counseling

We pledge to provide spiritual counseling, advice, guidance, and direction to those members of the community who are struggling because of unemployment and who need assistance to deal with their crises.

Prayer for Employment

**Lord, there are many people in our nation who are in need of a steady job with sufficient wages to care for themselves and their families.
Help these people remain diligent in their job search. Give them the confidence they need to succeed and the perseverance to continue on when they become discouraged.
Teach me to encourage those seeking employment and to offer them whatever assistance I can give.
Open the hearts of those responsible for hiring and for the care of unemployed people in industry and in government that they may carry out their work with compassion.
For all the unemployed in our nation, I offer my prayer that they might find productive works that enables them to use and develop their talents and skills and to meet their economic needs.**

Amen.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Table of Contents

About Joseph's People, Ltd.	5
Who We Are	6
What We Do	6
Where We Are: Chapter Locations	7
Preparing for Your Journey	9
Setting the Stage	10
The Emotional Journey	11
My Personal Journey	13
Spiritual Well Being	14
Exercise 1: Who am I?	15
Exercise 2: What gets me out of bed?	16
Exercise 3: What are my greatest hopes and fears?	17
Family and Support System	19
Exercise 4: Who is in my support system?	19
Physical & Emotional Well Being	21
Exercise 5: How is my health?	23
Financial Health	25
Exercise 6: My budget	25
Legal Situation	27
Exercise 7: How is my legal situation?	28
Quality of Life	29
Exercise 8: How is my quality of life?	29
Accomplishments and Goals	31
Exercise 9: My proudest accomplishments	31
Exercise 10: My short and long term goals	31
The Job Search Process	33
The Assessment Phase	35
Exercise 11: My professional accomplishments	35
Exercise 12: Identifying my strengths	36
Exercise 13: Identifying my values	38
Exercise 14: What am I looking for?	39
Exercise 15: My career objective	40
Exercise 16: My blind spots	41
The Action Phase	43
Your Resume	43
Resume Formats	44
Action and Key Words	50
Exercise 17: Accomplishment statements for my resume	50
Exercise 18: My resume worksheet	51
Cover Letters	53
References	55
Exercise 19: My Reference List	56
LinkedIn	57
Exercise 20: My LinkedIn Profile	57
Networking Business Card	59

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Exercise 21: My networking business card	60
Communication Methods.....	60
The 30 Second Introduction.....	61
Exercise 22: My 30 second intro	63
Marketing Yourself during Job Search	63
Networking	64
Exercise 23: My networking list	65
Exercise 24: Groups and places I can network	67
Utilizing the Internet During Job Search	67
Exercise 25: My Internet Plan.....	68
Using Professional Job Search Assistance.....	70
Job Fairs	72
The Interview Phase.....	74
Screening Interviews.....	74
Face to Face Interviews	77
Elements of Interviewing Success	77
Exercise 26: Preparation for common interview questions	78
Develop Stories and Prepare for Behavioral Interviewing.	81
Questions to ask during the interview.....	82
Exercise 27: Questions for you to ask during the interview	83
Preparing for Interview Day	83
Decision-Making Phase	88
Making a Wise Decision.....	88
Negotiating.....	89
Beginning Anew	91
Exercise 28: What have I learned?.....	91

About Joseph's People, Ltd.

***Lord, take me where You want me to go;
Let me meet who You want me to meet;
Tell me what You want me to say; and,
Keep me out of Your way.
Father Mychal Judge***

***Always do right.
This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.
Mark Twain***

Who We Are

Joseph's People is a faith-based, ecumenical non-profit that serves unemployed and underemployed people. Since 1995, we have helped more than 6,000 people recover from job loss. As an ecumenical, faith-based organization, we invite people of all faiths or otherwise to both receive the support of Josephs People and to participate in our ministry to job seekers. We have over 1,000 members, with 9 chapters in the Philadelphia area.

As a non-profit, we are run entirely by volunteers. We rely on our leaders, members, and business community to support our mission through their donations of financial aid, talent, and time. Our promise is to support our members on their Journey with care, concern, and love. This book is part of our ongoing commitment to that promise.

What We Do

Joseph's People is dedicated to helping workers who are unemployed or underemployed either obtain a job or transition into a new field that provides a family-supporting income. We have developed resources and access to resources to help our members as they make the transition into a new job.

We offer:

- **Periodic Chapter Meetings.** Our Chapter meetings provide a wide range of programs and expert speakers to ensure you have the most up-to-date resources in your job-search.

Our programs include:

- networking opportunities
- resources and information sharing among members
- counsel on job-search techniques, interviewing skills, and action plans
- resume review, critique and redrafting

In addition to a strong professional network and excellent resources, our meetings offer friendship and understanding from others who know exactly what you are going through.

- **My Journey.** Our guide to finding a new life, is given to each new member. *My Journey*, is a copyrighted publication written specifically for our members by field experts. It provides you with a path on how to move forward from the day you lose your job to the day you obtain your new one.
- **Website.** Our website (www.josephspeople.org) offers a calendar and information on the locations and standard meetings times of our various chapters.
- **The Blue Resource Guide.** Specifically designed to help former working professionals who do not meet criteria for standard aid programs, this guide identifies local, county, state, federal, and private resources our members have found beneficial. The Blue Resource Guide is available on our webpage.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- **A LinkedIn Group.** Our Joseph's People, Ltd. LinkedIn Group provides a network for our members before, during, and after their job search. You can find us at <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/60688>
- **Our Online Community at Groups.IO** We use this site to share information about companies that are hiring, job fairs, help through social service organizations, success stories, etc. As a member of a Chapter, you will receive meeting notices, speaker announcements and other information through our groups.io site. If you attend a Joseph's People meeting, you will be added to the groups.io online community. You may also go to <https://groups.io/g/JP> and ask to join the group.
- **Prayer support** within the ministry and from other worship groups. Prayer requests can be submitted on our website at www.josephspeople.org
- **A bridge with our graduate members,** local companies and recruiters to learn quickly where jobs are available and get the news into your hands.
- **There is never any charge for anything Joseph's People does for you.** At Joseph's People, we are not just concerned about you and your job. We are concerned about you as a person and about your family. Through the assistance of our individual and corporate volunteers, to help you survive your journey, we are able to provide modest support for food, gas and utilities for those in need.

Where We Are: Chapter Locations

We have grown over the past few years, for up-to-date information on meeting places and time, please contact the chapter at the contact information given for each group or call the hotline at 610-873-7117 or visit our website. Please be sure to speak slowly and give your name, a number where we can reach you.

BERKS COUNTY

Parish Meeting Room behind the school

READING

St Catharine's of Siena - Parish Center
2427 Perkiomen Ave., Reading, Pa 19601
Leader: John Senick,
Email: john.senick@josephspeople.org

Leader: Cheryl Spaulding
Email: Cheryl.spaulding@josephspeople.org

EAGLE

St. Elizabeth Parish - 120 St. Elizabeth Drive
Uwchlan, PA 19425
Leader: Dan Winand
Email: eagle@josephspeople.org

BUCKS COUNTY

PENNDL

Our Lady of Grace – Rectory
Bellevue Avenue, Penndel, PA
Leader: Georgeann Fears
Email: georgeann.fears@josephspeople.org

WEST GROVE
Assumption BVM Parish -
Parish Life Center
300 State Road, West Grove, PA 19390
Leader: Ann Barr
Email: ann.barr@josephspeople.org

CHESTER COUNTY

DOWNINGTOWN

St. Joseph Parish
332 Manor Avenue (Route 322)

DELAWARE COUNTY

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

ALDAN

Aldan Union Church –Career Crossroads
7 East Providence Road, Aldan PA 19018
Call 610-259-8010 (Church Phone) or

Leader: Dan Willard
Email: dan.willard@josephspeople.org

MAIN LINE

Wayne Presbyterian Church –
125 E. Lancaster Ave., Wayne, PA 19087
Room 306
Leader: Diane Merry
Email: diane.merry@josephspeople.org

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

HUNTINGTON VALLEY
St. Albert the Great Parish
212 Welsh Rd., Huntington Valley, PA
Parish Auditorium or Parish Center
Call 610-873-7117 Leave Message
Leader: Suzanne Curran
Email: suzanne.curran@josephspeople.org

CENTRAL DELCO

Two locations with coordinated meetings:

MEDIA

Media Presbyterian Church
30 E. Baltimore Avenue, Media, PA 19063
Leader: Jan Babikian
Email: jan.babikian@josephspeople.org

UPPER DARBY

St. Laurence Church
8245 West Chester Pike
Upper Darby, PA 19082
Leader: Ernie Russom
Email: ernie.russom@josephspeople.org

Preparing for Your Journey

***He that can't endure the bad,
Will not live to see the good.
Jewish Proverb***

***I have learned to live each day as it comes,
and not to borrow trouble by dreading tomorrow.
It is the dark menace of the future that makes cowards of us.
Dorothy Dix***

***Nobody who is somebody
Looks down on anybody
Margaret Deland***

Setting the Stage

Most journeys have a starting point and a destination, with many decision points in between. The same is true for a job search or a career transition. Both begin with the end goal or destination in mind. Next, comes developing a plan to get there. And, finally, comes preparing and implementing a strategy so that you make good decisions along the way and arrive at your destination.

The journey you are about to embark on will be exciting and scary, confusing and exhilarating. It will create opportunities for you to make important decisions about your future, decisions that may or may not reflect those you have made in the past. There will probably be some blind curves and bumps in the road. But, rest assured, this is a Journey worth taking and one where the help and support of caring individuals at Josephs People will help you arrive safely at your destination.

Five Basic Truths

Before you start your Journey, it's important to pack some things for the trip. What you will be packing are not the customary things like clothes and a toothbrush. Instead, you will be traveling light with a set of Five Basic Truths that will guide you as you proceed.

These Five Basic Truths are:

1. There is no one way to conduct a job search.

Think of your job search as if it were on a continuum. On one end, are things that seem to work over and over while, on the other, are things that usually don't work at all. And, in the middle, are a whole lot of options to choose from. People are too complex with different personalities, strengths, needs, and so forth to suggest a single approach would be best for all. What might work for one person might not work for you, and vice versa.

2. You must maintain a positive mental outlook.

Upwards to 90% of your success in finding a new job is mental. Since about 60-65% of the people conducting a job search will get their next job through networking, presenting yourself to others in a positive and confident fashion is a must for success. Without a positive outlook, negativity will often appear at the wrong moment, such as when speaking with a new networking contact about why you left your last job.

3. The more you know about finding a job, the better.

Educating yourself about what to do and how to do it in the job search process gives you an edge and allows you to make more informed decisions. Taking advantage of opportunities to learn from volunteers, colleagues and professionals puts you in a better position to distinguish yourself from others, a key ingredient in your success.

4. You must have a plan and a strategy to implement your plan.

Since this is a journey, you must have a plan and a strategy to get the best results. If not, you risk falling into a pattern where your energies are scattered, as you are forced to be reactive rather than proactive to various situations as they arise.

5. Finding a job is a job.

This is now your job. Like any job, it will take time and effort to accomplish your goals. You will be in competition with others for the jobs that are out there. You will need to work hard; but, more importantly, with the help and support of the volunteers at Joseph's People, you will need to work smart.

The Emotional Journey

Showing emotion is a natural reaction to change. For many, the Emotional Journey is the most difficult part of the job search process. You will want to prepare yourself for both good days and bad days. It helps to remember that your worst day (e.g., being rejected for a job you really wanted) will not be as bad as it will seem and your best day (e.g., thinking you have identified the perfect job) will probably not be quite as good as it will appear.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross developed a model about the five stages of grief that has been adapted to fit the job search. The emotions a job searcher may feel can be divided into six phases. Although you may not experience these emotions exactly the way or in the same order as they are presented below, don't be surprised if you do experience at least some of these phases.

Shock & Denial: Even when they are expecting the bad news, people often describe the shock of learning they no longer have a job as being hit with a brick. Some go through a period of denial, thinking that this is all a bad dream and that somehow the company may even bring them back.

Anger: Many go through a period where they are angry, often displacing this anger on family and friends, even colleagues who were not let go. Some job seekers get trapped in this phase and are unable to let go of their anger which impedes their ability to move into action.

Bargaining: At this stage, many job seekers experience a bargaining phase when they go over what happened reviewing various what if scenarios. They may ask themselves what they did wrong and what they could have done differently to avoid the job loss.

Sadness & Depression: When the realization sinks in that things aren't going to change, it's not unusual for some to experience a sadness or depression that can feel overwhelming.

Acceptance: Often with the help of a trusted friend or family member, sadness evolves into a general acceptance of what is.

Action: Acceptance will often lead to taking action to resolve the situation.

The Dis-Employment Cycle

Unemployed people often move:

From GRIEF

Over having lost their job, their business friends and their status;

TO ANGER

At having been let go, perhaps singled out unfairly

To DENIAL

*That this can't possibly be happening to them or that this will end all on it's own,
"it's a mistake"*

Into INERTIA

*or not being able to do anything productive or spending time busily doing things to
feel good but which will not get another job;*

To OBJECTIVITY,

*being able to see the situation for what it is: one more life experience, a problem
to be dealt with;*

And finally to EMPLOYABILITY,

*being ready, willing, and able to release the past and move to a new job, or a
career change with enthusiasm and excitement.*

-Joan McCrea

You will weather this storm, coming out of it a better, stronger person than you were when it began. Here is the Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker who is the patron of all working people. Ask for help.

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER

(For employment)

*God our Father and our Creator, You bestow on
Us gifts and talents to develop and use in accord with Your will.*

*Grant to me, through the intercession of St. Joseph the Worker,
As model and guide, employment and work, that I may with dignity,
provide for those who depend upon me for care and support.*

*Grant me the opportunities to use
my energy and my talents and abilities
for the good of all,
and the glory of Your name. Amen*

My Personal Journey

We can never know how much good a simple smile can do.
Mother Teresa

Spirituality is the sacred center out of which all life comes, including Mondays and Tuesdays and rainy Saturday afternoons in all their mundane and glorious detail. The spiritual journey is the soul's life commingling with ordinary life.
Christina Baldwin

***I never asked God for success,
I asked God for wonder and God never let me down.***
Rabbi Abram Heschel

***God never asked me to be successful,
God asked me to be faithful.***
Mother Teresa

Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.
Mark Twain

***There are victories of the soul and spirit.
Sometimes, even if you lose, you win.***
Elie Wiesel

***Courageous men never lose the zest for living
even though their life situation is zestless.
Cowardly men, overwhelmed by the uncertainties of life, lose the will to live.
We must constantly build dykes of courage to hold back the flood of fear.***
Martin Luther

Taking Stock

Often, the stress of looking for a job is compounded by the stress that comes from some issues directly related to your employment situation. Confronting them early on will help you keep your mind free to conduct your search.

Just as you would check the oil and tires on your car, stock up on food, and perhaps buy a map before a road trip, consider the following six elements to success as you embark on your job search journey.

- **Spiritual Well Being**
- **Family and Support System**
- **Physical and Mental Health**
- **Financial Health**
- **Legal Situation**
- **Quality of Life**

Spiritual Well Being

Every sunrise and sunset beckons us to follow something, someone greater than ourselves. Our spiritual journey will demand time for reflection. In solitude and silence, our souls can hear the deepest yearnings of our hearts. Only then can we discover what we truly believe, what we can depend upon, and what will sustain us in good and bad times.

Meditate on your life, its meaning, and your relationships with others. As you reflect, ponder which aspects of yourself you would like to work on.

- Do you have daily habits that interfere with your family relationships? Small changes in personal habits can have a major positive impact on family life.
- Do you have a personal mission in life? How would you define it to a stranger? Does your personal mission align with your work?
- What would you like to carry with you into your future? Identify and leave behind destructive habits. Bring only the best with you.
- What are you building with your life? Are you satisfied with where and who you are? Are your faith, family, work, and play lives balanced?

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Are the words above different than the ones you would have used to describe yourself before your job loss? If so, how are they different? What does all this say about how you view yourself?

Exercise 2: What gets me out of bed?

What are the ten things that make you get up out of bed each morning? What do they mean to you? Prioritize the top five.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

8 _____

9 _____

10 _____

Is there consistency between your top five things that get you out of bed and the kind of job(s) or career(s) you are pursuing? If yes, good. If no, does this pose a potential problem down the line when you do achieve your goal(s)?

Let us pray.

Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is,
than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination,
will affect everything.
It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you will spend your weekends,
what you read, whom you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.
Fall in love, stay in love,
and it will decide everything.
(Pedro Arrupe, S.J.)

Exercise 3: What are my greatest hopes and fears?

Loss and hardship feed our deepest fears but they also push us to seek our greatest hopes.

What is your greatest fear? If it became a reality, how would you face it?

Who could you turn to if you needed help? What resources could you gather now to help you prepare?

Where do you place your hope?

Is God your hope? How has God helped you in the past? Will not God's mercy and compassion continue?

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Psalm 139

*LORD, you have probed me, you know me:
you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest;
with all my ways you are familiar.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me
and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
far too lofty for me to reach.
Where can I go from your spirit?
From your presence, where can I flee?
If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;
if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
If I take the wings of dawn**

and dwell beyond the sea,
Even there your hand guides me,
your right hand holds me fast.*

II

*You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully
made;*

wonderful are your works!

III

*How precious to me are your designs, O
God;*

how vast the sum of them!

*Were I to count them, they would outnumber
the sands;*

when I complete them, still you are with me.

Probe me, God, know my heart;

try me, know my thoughts.

Dependence on God.

Luke 12: 22-34

Jesus said to [his] disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life and what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear. For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. Notice the ravens: they do not sow or reap; they have neither storehouse nor barn, yet God feeds them. How much more important are you than birds! Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your lifespan? If even the smallest things are beyond your control, why are you anxious about the rest? Notice how the flowers grow. They do not toil or spin. But I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass in the field that grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith? As for you, do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not worry anymore. All the nations of the world seek for these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these other things will be given you besides. Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

May you find your treasure and fill your heart and life with God's will for you!

Family and Support System

It's important during a job search to be able to turn to your support system for help. Your support system can include your spouse or significant other, family, friends, neighbors, faith community or other community groups.

Families have a way of rallying support for a member in need. But sometimes, we just don't have family, or we are distanced from them. Don't be afraid to ask for help and seek counsel from others in your support system whether they are related to you or not. It is important to remain open and honest with people about your thoughts, feelings, and plans. Sometimes, speaking with a volunteer from Joseph's People or a professional can help bring a different perspective to your situation. Things may not be as dire as they seem, and, if they are, we will help you find the help you need.

Take a moment to assess your support system and family situation. Let's identify your biggest concerns and who you can count on for help during this time.

Exercise 4: Who is in my support system?

When you look at your family situation, what is your greatest fear?

How will you overcome it?

Do you have a spouse or significant other?

Are they currently working? If you need income, how do you think they can help?

Is your spouse or significant other also unemployed or disabled? What are the things you can do to help this situation?

Is there anything your spouse or significant other will have difficulty with about your job situation? What is it? How will you help them with their concerns?

Are you divorced, separated, a widow or widower, or not currently living with a spouse or significant other?

Will this cause a problem? How?

How will you work with your former spouse or significant other?

Are you single?

Do you have friends who can help? How might they be able to help you?

Do you belong to groups, organizations or a faith community that can help you? Who are they and how can they help?

Do you have siblings?

How can your siblings help you?

Do you have children?

Are your children grown and in a position to assist you? If yes, how might you ask for their help?

Do you have young, dependent children? How do you plan to talk to them about your situation. What might they be able to do to help (for example, helping around the house, cutting back on expenses). Being open and honest with your children and giving them a way to help, is often the best way to alleviate their fears.

Physical & Emotional Well Being

When challenges threaten our families, we often ignore our own needs. We focus on the things we can do to help our family without taking care of ourselves. During this period of job loss, you must be diligent about taking care of yourself. The healthier you are physically and mentally, the better you will be able to handle this situation. The following section was provided to us by Dr. Lucy Hornstein, a graduate of the Medical College of Pennsylvania with over 30 years of experience in Family Medicine.

Maintaining My Physical Health

By Lucy Hornstein, M.D.

Healthy living is something you should be addressing throughout your life, regardless of your employment status. If eating right, getting enough sleep and exercise, and not letting stress get to you haven't been your first priorities in the past, NOW is an excellent time to turn things around. Your life literally depends on it.

On the other hand, be careful about trying to make abrupt changes. Losing a job is a traumatic event, and big changes are not a good idea in the wake of a trauma. Just be aware that taking care of your physical health by improving your lifestyle is important in the long run.

It may sound silly, but physical health depends on surprisingly simple things. I like to break healthy living down to the basics: Eat; Sleep; Move.

Eat

The best diet is a balanced diet; one that consists of a wide variety of foods, preferably fresh as opposed to processed, with plenty of vegetables and fruits. As I said above, though, now is not the time for abrupt changes. Food is so much more than just physical nourishment, and there's nothing wrong with comfort food. In moderation, that is. There's no such thing as a "forbidden food." When practicing true moderation, you can eat anything you want.

That said, consider taking this opportunity to improve your diet. You don't have to start eating fish every day, especially if you hate it, but in this part of your journey, perhaps you have a little more time than you may have previously to think about your food. Explore recipes, improve your culinary skills, clip some coupons and shop with more awareness. You do not have to spend a lot of money to eat well. On the flip side, don't go stocking up on pasta and canned goods for fear of running out of money for food. A diet high in carbs and processed foods isn't going to help at all.

A quick word about food pantries and other charitable food sources: These are important resources that you should not discount due to shame or embarrassment. The people who do this work are kind, discreet, and non-judgmental. Most of their clients have only short-term need for their services. Think of charity as a wheel: sometimes you're at the top, giving. But then the wheel can turn, and you may find yourself in need. Don't hold yourself

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

back from accepting charity from others; with time, the wheel will turn, and you will once again be in a position to give.

Sleep

Rest and renewal are a gift from God that we receive every day. Poor sleep, both quantity and quality, is associated with depression, high blood pressure, weight gain, and anxiety, among many other physical and mental ailments. Adults should ideally get a minimum of 7-9 hours of sleep every night. (6 hours is the absolute minimum.) It's difficult to keep that critically important positive outlook when you're not well rested. That said, many of the basics of a good night's sleep are frequently overlooked. Together, these things are called "sleep hygiene."

- Go to bed at the same time every night, and get up at the same time every morning, including weekends, holidays, and vacations.
- Don't nap during the day.
- The bedroom should be cool, dark, and quiet. Dark means no TV and no electronics in the bedroom. Quiet means no fans or white noise machines. Ear plugs and sleep masks can help.
- Avoid all electronic screens for at least an hour before bed, including phones, tablets, and back-lit e-readers. (Screens emit blue light, which works like the daylight sky to your brain, telling it to be awake.)
- No reading, eating, watching TV, or anything else in bed (except intimacy, of course.) The bed is only for sleep.
- If you can't sleep: get up and leave the bedroom. Read a book or do something non-stimulating until you feel sleepy. Then go back to bed.
- Avoid vigorous exercise, heavy meals, and alcohol within four hours of bedtime

An important note about a surprisingly common medical condition called Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA): If you suffer from daytime sleepiness, never awake refreshed regardless of how long you slept, and if you snore or stop breathing at night (you may wake yourself gasping, though not always) it is vitally important to see a doctor. OSA can be effectively treated with weight loss and/or a machine that keeps your airway open with positive pressures (PAP). Without treatment, it can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke, among other things. Please don't ignore possible OSA symptoms.

Move

It's been said that a sedentary lifestyle is worse than smoking. I'm not sure if I'd go that far, but lack of exercise is definitely not good for you. You do not need an expensive gym membership, or thousands of dollars worth of equipment to exercise. From the perspective of health, all you need to do is walk. Thirty minutes a day. Every day. (Well, they say "most days," but aiming for every day takes that into account.) How fast? A little too fast to comfortably have a conversation, if you're walking with someone. If you can talk, bump up your speed a little.

Again, sudden changes are not good. If you haven't been active at all, take it slow. Start with five minutes the first week. Then move it up to ten. Work your way up gradually. You

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

can do more than thirty minutes if you want, but anything past that is optional from the standpoint of health.

If you have arthritis or another condition that interferes with walking, biking and swimming work too. Yoga is helpful for stretching and overall well-being. Whatever you choose, your body was meant to move.

Other Useful Tips:

1. If you have a relationship with a primary doctor, TELL them what you are going through. They can help with streamlining medication regimens to make them more economical, along with other important ways to maintain your physical health.

2. DON'T go overboard on "preventive care." This may sound counterintuitive, but the vast majority of preventive medicine doesn't save money, and doesn't make you live longer. About the only exception to this rule would be to take care of your blood pressure and any other chronic diseases like diabetes. But don't worry about your colonoscopy or mammogram. Unless you have blood in your stools or a lump in your breast, it can wait.

3. Don't bother with vitamins and supplements. All they do is give you very expensive urine.

4. The best cash drug prices are at Costco, where BY LAW you do NOT need to be a member to use the pharmacy. There are also several other drug discount cards like GoodRx. Be a savvy medication shopper. Many medications are cheaper without using insurance.

Exercise 5: How is my health?

How is your health? Is it good or not so good?

Do you have health insurance? What does your future plan for health insurance include?

If you don't have health insurance any more, how can you get healthcare and medicine?

How do you think your physical reaction to your stressful situation will affect you?

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

How can you deal with your stressful situation? How can you help yourself keep a positive mental attitude?

Do you have the need for professional mental health care? Do you have access to professional mental health provider? If not, is there someone who you can talk to instead, such as a pastor or counselor with a non-profit group?

How can you keep up your physical health or improve it?

Financial Health

Many households have never created a budget or tracked their cash flow. Your household must not be one of those. You must know your cash inflow (income) and outflow (expenses). Knowing this will provide a road map for managing your financial assets. Most importantly, it will highlight the expenses that must be curtailed or eliminated during your unemployment.

Your goal is to spend less cash than what you receive while safeguarding against unanticipated emergencies. Take special note of the word “cash”. Cash is what you earn or what you receive in severance pay or unemployment benefits. A credit card is not cash. It is debt.

Once you know your monthly income and expenses, review each expense item to determine its value. How important are cable TV, cell phones, store-bought coffee, tobacco products, when compared to mortgage payments, basic utilities, and food for the family? You must allocate your financial resources to the areas that are most critical to your family. Identifying which areas are critical expenses is often challenging since household members' priorities may conflict. It will take patience, understanding and compromise to construct and adhere to a financial plan that achieves everyone's longer-term goals. If you feel the situation warrants expert mediation, do not hesitate to consult a financial or family counselor.

Once you have identified your income sources and determined which expense items will be maintained or curtailed, you are ready to construct a financial plan, better known as a budget. A budget is a plan that shows cash coming in (income) and cash going out (expense).

Your budget should be month by month for the first 3 months and then quarterly for a full year. Update the plan at the end of each quarter. Your goal is to live as close to your budget as possible.

***If money had been the way to save the world,
Christ Himself would have been rich.
Phyllis Bottome***

Exercise 6: My budget

Take a few minutes to review the worksheets below and fill-in the amount corresponding to each applicable item. Discuss the worksheets with family members and revise the worksheet items, if necessary, to fit your unique situation.

If you struggle to complete the worksheets because your cash disappears during the month, you must begin to log every item greater than \$1.00 that you and your household members purchase. Do this for 4-6 weeks and use the completed worksheets as a guide to identify every source (income) and use (expense) of your monthly household cash. For those of you who would rather track expenses on your phone or online there are many helpful apps and programs such as Quicken or the YNAB (You Need a Budget) app.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Monthly Cash Income (net of taxes):

Severance Pay	
Unemployment Insurance	
Interest/Dividend Income	
Alimony/Child Support	
Pension Benefits	
Insurance Proceeds	
Other	
Total Cash Inflows	

Monthly Cash Expense:

Mortgage Principal and Interest	
Mortgage Insurance	
Rent/Condo Fee	
Homeowners/Renters Insurance	
Home Repairs	
Medical/Dental Insurance	
Life Insurance	
Disability Insurance	
Prescriptions	
Utilities - Heat/Water/Electric	
Phone/Cable/Internet	
Loan Payments - Auto/Home Equity/Credit Card	
Loan Payments - Student Loans	
Auto - Gas/Maintenance/Oil Change	
Auto Insurance	
Food/Beverage	
Tobacco Products	
Clothing/Cleaners	
Real Estate Taxes	
Day Care	
School Tuition	
School Supplies	
Subscriptions	
Other	
Total Cash Outflows	

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Budget:

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Quarter	Quarter	Quarter
<u>Income Items:</u>						
<u>Expense items:</u>						
<u>Net Cash</u>						

Legal Situation

Are there any legal ramifications to your job situation? Do you feel you were illegally discharged from your job or discriminated against? Rather than simply asking around, it might be wise to consult with legal counsel first to see whether you have a case. Remember everyone's situation is different, so what happened to your friend may not necessarily apply to you.

If you do not have a collective bargaining agreement or other form of contract from your employer, you are employed "at will", and unfair treatment is not necessarily unlawful. That does not mean, however, that employers can do whatever they want.

For example, excluding employees under 40, it is unlawful for an employer to make a negative decision regarding an employee simply because he or she is older. This does not mean it is automatically illegal to decide in favor of a younger employee, but it does mean age cannot be the reason.

Assuming that a worker is limited due to health conditions can also fall under discrimination based on a perceived disability. Employers are legally obligated to consider reasonable accommodations which will allow the employee to meet job expectations. Failure to do so may be another form of unlawful disability discrimination. Sometimes, both age discrimination and disability discrimination are simultaneously present.

Aged related stereotypes are also illegal. These include unjustified assumptions that a worker will not continue working because of retirement, that the worker is unable to adapt to new technologies, or that the worker is more likely to develop health related attendance issues.

If you receive advance warning of your termination, you should consider consulting counsel even before it actually happens. Keep in mind that many employment statutes have very short statutes of limitations so, if you are not sure whether your termination was lawful, don't delay in seeking advice. For help locating free or nearly free Legal Services, consult the Blue Resource Guide.

Exercise 7: How is my legal situation?

What are you are most concerned will happen to you or your family legally?

How will you deal with these problems so that you minimize or avoid them?

Legal issues are difficult to understand and stressful. Where or whom can you get help from?

***Laws are like cobwebs, which may catch
small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through.
Jonathan Swift***

Quality of Life

Being without a job has the potential to dramatically alter quality of life for you and your family. You may have to adapt parts of your prior lifestyle to your new situation. However, you must continue to live and enjoy your life. The key is balance.

Having someone who can help you weigh the major decisions you will have to make can remove a tremendous burden. Discussing such issues with family, friends, a counselor, or a volunteer from Joseph's People can help you put decisions like these into perspective and will often help lessen any guilt you may feel in making them.

Consider this time an opportunity to take stock and alter the quality of life you and your family enjoy. Let's explore what you felt your quality of life was before you started this Journey.

Exercise 8: How is my quality of life?

If you are honest with yourself, how you would change the quality of your life before you lost your job?

Up until now, how did you measure personal success?

If you had to change your measures of success, what would you change it to?

What issues would concern or worry you?

What could you do about your concerns or worries?

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

How do you think others see you?

How do you see yourself?

If these perceptions are not the same, why? And is this a good or bad thing?

If you need to change perceptions, how can you go about it?

If you do not know how others see you, who could you ask to help discover the answer?

***O would some Power the gift to give us
To see ourselves as others see us!
"To A Louse," Robert Burns***

***Success is to be measured not so much by the position
that one has reached in life,
as by the obstacles that one has overcome while trying to succeed.
Booker T. Washington***

Accomplishments and Goals

Goals are important. When you write down your goals and how you plan to achieve them, the parts of your brain that control anxiety and fear switch off. It's like writing a shopping list. With a shopping list, going to the grocery store is less of a chore than without one.

Goals provide you a clear, attainable path. Having this path will help you remain focused and encouraged as you work toward accomplishing your goals. You will also get rid of your anxiety because you will know exactly what you need to do and how to get it done.

As you take stock of your life and set goals to achieve, it is important to explore your heart's desires. Take a moment to appreciate the many great things you have already accomplished. Ask yourself what you want to accomplish next and consider how your goals fit in with what you want to get out of life.

Exercise 9: My proudest accomplishments

List some of your proudest accomplishments. Keep in mind that these can be personal or career related. For example, an accomplishment might be that you hiked the Grand Canyon or that you overcame a personal challenge. These are not necessarily accomplishments that will end up on your resume but they are accomplishments nevertheless.

Exercise 10: My short and long term goals

This exercise will guide you through setting wise goals, both short and long term. You will need two pieces of lined paper. Fold the first piece of paper long-ways. Label the left side "Short-Term Goals" and the right side "Long-Term Goals".

On the left hand side of the paper, write a list of short-term goals. Your short-term goals should include things you can do quickly and easily. They can be as simple as "getting a new outfit" or "fixing my cell phone message".

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Now, turn to the right hand side of the paper and write a list of your long-term goals. Number these too. Here you will be looking into your future. These goals are more complex and take more time to complete. They might include “get my car working”, “get a good job”, or “find a better place to live.”

Once you have finished, label the second piece of paper “My Goals Page”. Put this second piece of paper next to your first list. Take a look at the goals you wrote down. What do you see? Will your short-term goals get you to your long-term goals?

For example, a short-term goal of getting a new outfit will probably help you achieve a long-term goal of going to a job interview if your closet is low on business appropriate attire. However, spending time with your friend probably won't land you the same job interview.

If you notice your short-term goals aren't aligning with your long-term ones, think about what should change. Go through your list a couple of times until you feel you have several clear goals. Write them down on your “My Goals Page”.

Post your final list somewhere you will see it frequently. Some good places might be the door of your refrigerator, your bathroom mirror, or your bedroom door. Once you have completed a goal, mark it through with a red pencil.

This is your map to your new future.

Short Terms Goals	Long Term Goals

The Job Search Process

Do not be afraid of going slowly, be afraid of standing still.
Eastern Proverb

Just because you made a mistake, doesn't mean you are a mistake.
Georgette Mosbacher

***"Ask and it will be given you;
Seek and you will find;
Knock and the door will be opened for you."***
Luke 11:9

***When you ask, seek and knock you will never find yourself
empty-handed.***

Feel free to Ask:

Value yourself and know you are worthy.

Seek:

God's wisdom will not fail you.

Knock:

With firmness and expectation.

***It pleases God to make your life full and abundant. Therefore,
do not sit idly by waiting for something to happen. With your
heart grounded in prayer and gratitude, take action and the
door will be opened and your needs will be supplied.***

Reflection by Theresa Capriotti, Joseph's People Chaplain

Why Should a Company Hire Me?

The million dollar question of every job search is, "Why does a company hire you?"

One might think it is because they want your expertise or particular experience. Perhaps, but, looking at it from their perspective, it may be that they have a problem that they have not been able to solve using their existing staff or by hiring a consultant.

If you can:

- Discover what the problem is,
- Determine what will be required to fix it,
- Convince them that you can solve it,
- You are more likely to be hired.

This is a key aspect of presenting yourself. Your introductions and interviews are not about you. They are about how you can help the company.

Let's consider the stages of a successful job search. Knowing these phases will provide context and guidance on your Journey. It is important to start at the beginning and complete each stage before moving on to the next. Otherwise, you risk becoming frustrated and discouraged early on. Imagine what a waste of time it would be to blindly send out resumes the day after you lose your job without considering your goals and how to best achieve them. These are the five phases of the job search process:

- **Assessment**
- **Action**
- **Interviewing**
- **Decision-Making**
- **Beginning Anew**

It isn't where you came from; it's where you're going that counts.
Ella Fitzgerald

*No one can make you feel inferior
without your consent.
Never give it!*
Eleanor Roosevelt

The Assessment Phase

In the first phase of your job search, you will be answering these questions:

- What are your professional accomplishments?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your values and goals?
- What would you like to do in the future?

Your goal will be to determine a career objective that will guide your job search.

Exercise 11: My professional accomplishments

Let's start with your professional accomplishments. Unlike the earlier exercise, these accomplishments should be work and career related. These achievements can be large or small but should highlight how you approach challenges at work. We're not looking for awards here, but how you tackled a problem and succeeded in solving it.

Take some quiet time to think about what you have accomplished over the years at work. Some find it easiest to start with their more recent accomplishments within the last 2-3 years and then work backwards to points earlier in their careers. Don't censor your thoughts; just jot them down.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

The acronym P-A-R is a helpful way to organize your accomplishments. P-A-R stands for:

- The **P-roblem** (e.g., Challenge, Situation, or Task) you were presented with.
- The **A-ction** you took in solving the problem. If you worked as part of a team, it's important to talk about your particular role in the achievement.
- The **R-esults** of your action. The more you can quantify the result (e.g., express it in dollars, time, percentages, increases, decreases), the better.

A professional P-A-R accomplishment might read like this:

(P-roblem) An inordinate amount of time and money was being spent processing over 100 resumes that came into the office per week on average.

(A-ction) So I researched the problem, recommended a solution, and initiated the purchase of a resume screening and tracking system.

(R-esult) This resulted in an annual savings of over \$10,000 in resume handling costs over the course of a year.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Decision making and problem solving are the two biggest elements of any job. Consistently making good decisions and solving problems is what sets a good employee apart from a bad one.

As you review your career, think of the times that you made a good decision or solved a problem. Come up with eight (or more, if you get on a roll) accomplishments. Don't forget to break down each of your accomplishments according to P-A-R.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

***Don't be afraid to give your best to what seemingly are small jobs.
Every time you conquer one it makes you that much stronger.
If you do the little jobs well,
the big ones tend to take care of themselves.
Dale Carnegie***

Exercise 12: Identifying my strengths

Now that you have identified at least eight accomplishments, it's time to determine your strengths. A strength is something you are good at and enjoy doing.

A good way of identifying your strengths is to go through your accomplishments, identifying skills, abilities, and qualities that repeatedly come up. Another way to identify your strengths is to think about what sets you apart from others. What is different and unique about you? What do your colleagues and friends come to you for? Ask them what they think of as your strengths, you may be surprised. We often overlook our strengths because they are typically the things that come most easily to us, so we don't value them highly. We think that because it is easy for us, it must be easy for everyone.

Here are some descriptions of strengths that our members have used:

- One of my strengths is my **organizational skills**. I am known for my ability to keep many details and key information organized and easy for everyone on my team to access. At my last position, if anyone needed to find key information, I was the one they asked.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- I am an excellent **team builder**. I enjoy hiring and building teams who work well together and have complementary skills. At my last position, my team had the highest employee satisfaction scores in the company.
- My **persuasive writing skills** are quite strong. I can convey a clear, compelling message for marketing, sales and public relations purposes. For example, at my last position, I was often asked to write copy for ads and sales proposals even though it wasn't officially part of my job.
- My **technology skills** are a strength of mine. In particular, I am able to quickly learn and apply technology in a wide variety of situations and teach others to use it as well. For example, at my last position, I helped to implement a new learning management system and trained the staff how to use it. I received a commendation from the company for managing such a smooth software implementation process.
- I have particularly strong **analytical skills** and am an expert with a wide range of data analysis tools such as Access, Stata and Excel. At my last position, I was known as a whiz with numbers who could also present my findings in a way that was understandable to others.
- My **strategic planning** abilities have been a key strength over the years. My ability to see the big picture and connect the strategy into key action steps was the reason I was asked to write the annual strategic plan for the company.
- I have strong **customer service** skills. My ability to build rapport with customers and resolve difficult customer service issues with a smile. Any time there was a difficult customer service problem, I was the one who was asked to deal with it.

As you identify 3-4 of your major strengths, try to refrain from putting down predictable qualities like: motivated, good communicator, loyal, trustworthy, dependable, or hard-working. What is unique and compelling about you?

What are your major strengths?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

If you're having trouble identifying your strengths, there are some books and tools that can help you including *What Color is Your Parachute* by Richard Nelson Bolles (the seven stories exercise) or *Strengthsfinder* by Tom Rath that provides descriptions of general strengths that may be helpful for you.

Exercise 13: Identifying my values

This exercise will help you identify your values. When you are conducting a job search understanding and acknowledging your values and how they relate to your work or career takes on great significance. The reason is simple. At this stage in your life, it's important that whatever you do next fits into your value system.

Using the list of values below—and adding any additional ones you feel are relevant—rank your top five values, focusing on what matters most to you in a job or career.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I value a job that offers:

High Pay/Top Benefits
Status/Title
High Job Security
Opportunities to Advance
Opportunities for Praise
Adventure/Risk Taking
Repetitious challenging duties
Promotion Opportunities
Significant Interaction with People
Little Contact with the Public
Flexible Work hours
9-5 Routine (no extra hours)
Ability to enter right after HS
Ability to enter w/2 yr. Degree
Ability to enter w/4 yr. Degree
Little Stress
Safe Conditions
Slow-Pace
Fast-Pace
Clean Conditions
Money to Supplement other income
Significant Travel
Little to no Travel

I value a job that allows me to:

Work Outdoors
Work Sitting at a Desk
Work Indoors
Work Moving Around all day
Have Fun
Be Creative
Work Independently
Feel Useful
Make a Difference for Society
Work as Part of a Team
Control what I do
Help Others
Make Decisions
Be Close to Home
Work with Machines-Technology
Enter with minimal training
Exercise Power
See the results of my Work
Influence Others
Keep busy
Be the leader of a Group

Exercise 14: What am I looking for?

Now that you have identified your professional accomplishments, your strengths, and your values, you are ready to assess where you want to go next in life. Sit down in a quiet place and think carefully about your previous job. Did you enjoy it? Did it make you feel good? If you had the option, would you never to do it again? Has the job and that kind of position been outsourced overseas or eliminated entirely? Is there something you really want to do that you never had the opportunity to do before?

When you say, "I am..." you are defining yourself. This has a powerful influence on how your Journey progresses, the results you will achieve, and how happy you will be throughout your life. How would you define who you are?

Here are some prompts that might help you with this exercise:

- I really like doing ...
- I always wanted to...
- I can make money doing...
- There are real opportunities in my field in this area...
- I am willing to move to another part of the country if...
- Who can help me discover what I need to know about any job I want to pursue?

Now write down the job or jobs that you want to pursue. Limit it to two or three at the most. If you are not sure of the job title, spend some time online researching types of jobs. One great resource is www.onetonline.org. It has one of the best listings of careers and job titles out there. Another excellent resource is www.myskillsmyfuture.org that allows you to discover types of jobs that require your skillset.

Describe each job you choose with as many details as you can, including the industry, job title, and geographic area where it might be located. If you know the name of a company or a person who works in the industry, include that too.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

***Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond;
cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.***

Mark Twain

***Never work just for money or for power.
They won't save your soul or help you sleep at night.***

Marian Wright Edelman

Exercise 15: My career objective

The next step in the assessment portion of your journey is determining your Career Objective. Look at your accomplishments, strengths, and values from the previous exercises. While considering your strengths, look at the accomplishments you wrote and look for patterns that keep coming up, like having creative ideas or consistently being able to make the tough sale or always being the one asked to train others.

Your Career Objective describes the goal of your job search. It is what you think you would like to do in your next job. It will affect everything in your job search process, from how you write your resume to the verbiage you use to describe yourself. (Just a note: Don't confuse the Career Objective with an Objective on a resume. This objective is for you, to help you develop your plan.)

A Career Objective could be as simple as: I am looking to secure a position as an auditor in a small accounting organization.

Or it could be more detailed: I am looking to secure a position as an auditor in a small accounting organization in the Greater Philadelphia area that pays a minimum of \$50,000 per year, with no more than 20% travel and where the possibility for advancement exists.

It's okay if you don't know what you want your Career Objective to be. In fact, it's not unusual for people who have worked in a profession for years to realize it's simply no longer the right job for them. Taking time to find yourself is okay. However, defining your Career Objective remains vital to a successful job search.

Here's why.

An accountant whose goal is to progress his 15-year career in the field has a pretty clear Career Objective. Based on his Career Objective, his course of action will focus on finding another position within the accounting field. However, if the same accountant wanted to become a social worker in a non-profit organization, his Career Objective would change and so would his plan for achieving it.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

You may find yourself beginning your job search with multiple Career Objectives. Our accountant might start his job search thinking: "I'd like to be a social worker or maybe even a teacher; but, of course, I'm still going to look for an accounting position just in case." Each Career Objective will require a slightly different strategy.

As you define your Career Objective, focus on your strengths, values, interests, qualifications, and what you think you would like to do. If you find yourself with more than 2 "tracks" or Career Objectives, do a re-assessment and work out your priorities and which ones are reasonably attainable for you.

Your Career Objective can be as brief or as detailed as you like. Bear in mind that, while an overly general Career Objective may sound as though you'd do anything, an overly narrow one may eliminate you from opportunities. Lastly, remember that your Career Objective may change as you proceed on your Journey.

Exercise 16: My blind spots

The Journey is all about moving forward from being unemployed or underemployed to being fully employed and prepared for whatever happens in the future. However, before moving on to the action phase of your job search, it is prudent to take a hard look at what you have learned from the experience of becoming unemployed. Every single one of us has "blind spots" and may find ourselves facing similar situations or challenges repeatedly. Often, it is these blind spots that cause us the most difficulty.

Try identifying some blind spots that may have troubled you in the past. Here are some examples of blind spots, along with suggestions for dealing with them, worth considering:

- **Do you tend to rely on one or two primary relationships in an organization, rather than getting to know more of those who can affect your job?**
Management often changes and the person you relied upon may not remain in a position to influence your job. Consider cultivating a wider network within your next organization and maintaining relationships with others outside your organization now and as you move into a new position.
- **Do you have difficulty adapting to change?**
It's not unusual for companies to be purchased; or to merge with another. Pay attention to the fact that new ownership, a re-organization or a new boss may define success very differently than a previous one. It's important to recognize that change will happen. Control what you can control (such as the way you deal with change) and don't sweat the rest.
- **Do you stick to routines because you are comfortable with them and they have worked in the past? Do you find yourself resenting new duties?**

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Try to look at changes in work duties, routines, as opportunities, rather than problems. Change is constant. Being inflexible and unable to adapt to change is often a reason why employees are laid off or terminated. Seize any opportunity to be a solver of workplace problems, rather than an enabler of the status quo.

- **Do you have a tendency to gossip or openly criticize company policies that you disagree with, without considering the ramifications?**
Remember, there is a time and place for everything. Always use the appropriate channels to express your thoughts and opinions about your workplace. Be prepared to offer solutions, not just complaints.
- **Do you listen? Do you pay attention to customers, clients, co-workers, supervisors, as well as what is going on in your organization?**
It's certainly true that the more you listen, the more you will learn and be perceived as a valued employee. Every organization wants to succeed, so be proactive in identifying ways to improve your and your organization's performance.
- **Are you perceived as an optimist, or a pessimist who is always looking at reasons why something won't work?**
Organizations value people who are positive and proactive. These are employees who find ways of making something work, as opposed to those who are quick to point out why it won't.
- **Are you respected by your co-workers, customers, clients and supervisors?**
Respect in the workplace is earned by what you do and how you perform. Respected workers are not only valued but are often the first to be rewarded.
- **Are you perceptive? Do you keep your personal antenna up to determine cultural changes in your work environment?**
It's easy to ignore the warning signs and get caught unawares. Understanding what is acceptable behavior and adhering to the organization's cultural norms often is a determining factor in a worker's success.
- **Do you understand how your work helps your organization achieve its strategic goals and fits into the company's bottom line results?**
In every company, each employee has a role in helping the organization achieve its goals. Understanding this connection will help you better determine where to direct your efforts in helping your organization, and ultimately you, achieve success

Take a few minutes now to jot down a few areas where you may have blind spots:

The Action Phase

Once you have done your self-assessment and arrived at a Career Objective you are ready to take action! The first step in the Action Phase is to develop your resume.

Your Resume

Before you begin developing your resume, consider these important points.

- **The purpose of your resume is to get your foot in the door.** It is not to get you a job; only you can get yourself a job.
- **Most resumes don't ever get read; they are usually scanned for 20-30 seconds by a person or put through an electronic scanner.** The person or computer application known as an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is looking for "Key Words". These are words, often mentioned in the job posting, that directly reflect the requirements for the job (e.g., "team-player", "presentation skills"). To be considered, you need to use Key Words in your resume. An alternative way of determining Key Words is by conducting a mini research on-line and looking at similar job postings to see what words come up consistently.
- **Your resume must be concise; and support your Career Objective.** Your resume will typically be 1-2 pages long. It should contain information that supports your Career Objective. (In rare cases, some people, for example, scientists, will add an addendum that includes their patents, papers, and the like.) Just remember, your resume is not your autobiography.
- **Your resume must be easy to read.** It must be in a consistent format, featuring bulleted points as opposed to paragraphs; in an easily read typeface. While a conservative typeface like Times New Roman used to be the standard, it is now common and acceptable to use typefaces such as Calibri, Arial, Helvetica, Cambria, Georgia or Garamond; with a font size that is not too big or small to read (11-12 point). When printed, you should still choose white or off-white quality paper.
- **Your resume should address the needs of the reader.** This means you may want to customize your resume each time you send it to fit the individual and specific needs of each person reading it. Ask yourself: "What does this person need to know about me, in relation to what I perceive their needs to be, to make a decision to call me in for an interview?" Read the job description and use the same words (key words) to describe what you have done in previous jobs that relate to the responsibilities of the new position.
- **Your resume is a living document.** It will change as you change. Resist the temptation to write your resume and spend money to have 100 copies made. Instead keep it on your hard-drive or flash drive so that you can update and customize it as needed.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- **A resume should be written in the past tense without personal pronouns.**
The accomplishments on your resume have already occurred, so should be written in the past tense. When writing about job responsibilities (not accomplishments) for a current job, you may prefer to keep these in the present tense. Eliminate all references to “I”, “me”, or “we” since it is implied that it's your resume.

- **There is not one way to write a resume**
There are hundreds of books with examples of resumes to choose from. However, there are certain formats that work well most of the time and some choices that don't work well or may even hurt you. The two resume formats used here are ones Joseph's People volunteers and professional career consultants have determined to be the most consistently effective.

Resume Formats

There are two resume formats you can choose from while developing your resume: Chronological and Functional.

Chronological

In the Chronological resume the focus is on the chronology (time periods) of your work experience from most recent work experience going backwards. It is the traditional resume format and is perfect for those who are looking for the same or similar kind of work as before. If your most recent experience is the best indicator of how you can add value to whatever organization you work for, it is your resume of choice

Functional

Although most resumes tend to be Chronological, there are at least two good reasons for using what is called a Functional format:

- You are looking to make a change in your career and your most recent work experience is not the best indicator of what you could do for a future employer

- You either have not been in the work world for a while or your work background contains numerous gaps in time creating the perception of hopping from one job to another.

In the Functional resume, you are able to front-load your resume with accomplishments and experiences that are most relevant to the requirements of the job you are applying for. Information about your work experience, including where you worked and when, generally comes later in the Functional resume.

Some believe the Functional format should be used in only rare instances since it could indicate that the writer has something to hide, by not using the more traditional Chronological format. If, however, using the Chronological format does not adequately showcase your credentials, as they relate to the requirements of the job for which you are applying, then you will probably have a very difficult time convincing anyone to take a chance on considering you for the position.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Example Chronological Resume:

Mary Admin

Philadelphia, PA 19104

215-555-1213

www.linkedin.com/in/madmin/

madmin@com.com

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Highly skilled Administrative Assistant with over 10 years experience providing full range of administrative and secretarial services with working knowledge of current computer operating systems and expertise in:

- Event/Meeting Planning
- Customer Service
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Maintaining Confidential Files

WORK EXPERIENCE

Miller Corporation, Philadelphia, PA

2000 - Present

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, VP HUMAN RESOURCES

Managed the administration of office procedures for Vice President of Human Resources. Handled all incoming calls, maintained all company human resource files and records, and produced all departmental reports and meeting materials. Supervised three full- and part-time staff members

- Created and implemented record keeping system for over 500 employee records, salary administration, and performance reviews ensuring confidentiality and easy access.
- Typed all sensitive employee related correspondences including offer and termination letters ensuring that all departmental uniform standards were met.
- Researched and initiated purchase of resume scanning and tracking system resulting in an annual savings of over \$20,000 in resume handling costs.
- Produced PowerPoint presentation featuring over 70 slides for national meeting enabling company President to successfully introduce new employee bonus program.
- Planned successful three-day offsite national meeting for over 250 employees including travel, hotel, meals and equipment. Received letter of commendation from President.

Owens Manufacturing Company, Mead, PA

1996-2000

PERSONAL SECRETARY TO PLANT GENERAL MANAGER

Managed General Manager's office for family-owned manufacturing plant for custom switches for lighting industry. Managed all employee records and handled and dispatched to appropriate person all customer complaints. Served as main contact person for five member sales staff.

- Established entire office structure from inception including record-keeping, correspondences, data entry, and customer policy and procedures.
- Key member of team that wrote and produced first employee handbook ensuring consistent communication and implementation of company policies and procedures.
- Handled all incoming employee calls and helped resolve over 90% of employee problems before reaching Plant General Manager.

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Proficient in: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Microsoft Windows

COMMUNITY/VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Member of Philadelphia Branch Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Big Sister of the Year in 2013

EDUCATION

Bankston High School, Erie, PA (Secretarial Science)

Example Functional resume:

JOHN FUNCTION
Philadelphia, PA 19399
215-555-1212 – functionjj@pct.com

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Training and development professional with experience creating, marketing, and implementing talent development initiatives for internal and external customers. Areas of expertise include:

- Performance Improvement
- Organizational Change
- Management/Leadership
- Training and Employee Learning

Performance Improvement

- Coached key company executive resulting in improved on-the-job performance as noted by company CEO.
- Designed and implemented customer service training program for large retail organization resulting in 50% less customer complaints during first quarter.
- Designed and implemented Division-wide Performance Management system for over 500 employees.

Organizational Change

- Led company-wide Change initiative that implemented TQM program resulting in savings of \$95,000.
- Taught train-the trainer session for 10 managers enabling them to implement company change initiative.
- Conducted employee survey leading to recommendation and implementation of employee incentive program.

Management/Leadership

- Led Training department for major consulting firm during time of 50% growth in training revenue.
- Set strategy for training department of non-profit firm resulting in 75% improvement in employee satisfaction.
- Recruited, hired, and supervised staff of 15 trainers resulting in improved delivery of services to clients.

Training and Employee Learning

- Conducted ongoing training for, and ensured Company-wide standards were met by, all training deliverers.
- Led implementation of over 20 Interviewing programs that trained over 90 managers in uniform process.
- Led development and helped market nationally a communications skills video program with sales of 100K.

WORK EXPERIENCE

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS, INC. Parkside, PA (2004-2011)

Senior Consultant

MARK COPORATION, Philadelphia, PA (2002-2003)

Director Human Resources

THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION (1998-2002)

Education Specialist

ASSOCIATIONS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Association for Talent Development

Society for Human Resource Management

Vice President, The Mentoring Initiative (Philadelphia, PA Branch)

Past Chairperson, County-wide Food Bank Program (Chester County, PA)

EDUCATION

BA Psychology, Parkside College, Parkside, PA

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Key Resume Sections: Let's take a closer look at each section of the resume, using the chronological format as an example.

Heading

Name
Address (Only Use City and State)
Phone Number
LinkedIn URL
E-mail Address

This is your personal information. It tells the person reading your resume how they can get in touch with you. If you do not have an email address, now is time to get one since so much communication takes place by email. You can get a free email by going to www.mail.google.com and creating a gmail account. We also recommend that you include your LinkedIn profile URL in the top of your resume (see Exercise 20: LinkedIn Profile).

Job Title

Above your summary list the job title or a few words that describe the type of position you are seeking. Use job title or common terminology that matches positions being advertised

Summary

Your summary introduces you to a potential employer. It should include a concise description of your credentials in relation to your Career Objective while demonstrating how you satisfy the requirements of the job but also highlight what is unique about you. What you put in the summary needs to be supported with the details included later in the resume, especially in the Work Experience section.

Notice on the resume example the use of bullet points to introduce areas of expertise (or abilities, qualities, skills, that the candidate wishes to showcase). If your resume was a news article, the Summary would be the headline and lead paragraph. If it captures someone's attention chances are they will read further. If it doesn't, they will move on to one that does.

Work Experience

This is an explanation of your work experience. It includes company name, location, job title, and years of service, starting with your most recent job and working backwards. Notice in the resume example how the Work Experience also includes a description of your everyday duties that appears under your job title. Most importantly, it features your bulleted accomplishments, featuring your actions and their results.

In the functional format example, you will notice the bulleted accomplishments are stated upfront without dates or locations where they occurred. This means you can present experience from any point in your work history that supports your Career Objective and/or the requirements for the job. Your accomplishments can be presented in either descending order according to importance or, as shown in the example, under specific categories or headings. Since people tend to read from the top down, this format allows you to catch the reader's attention with relevant accomplishments, downplaying information that is less important (i.e., where and when you did it).

Professional and Personal Information

This section can include, but is not limited to:

- **Affiliations, Memberships, Volunteer and Community Work.** This refers to your involvement in social and professional associations. Your involvement is especially relevant if it is related to the kind of work you are looking for or you held a leadership role.
- **Technical Skills.** This section should include your expertise with software programs or other technical skills that are relevant for the position to which you are applying. Make sure whatever you include is current and mirrors the terminology that appears in the position description.
- **Military.** Preference is sometimes given to veterans.
- **Languages.** You must be able to read, write, and speak the language.
- **Publications.** These are your writings that have been published in a legitimate publication
- **Presentations.** These are your presentations on relevant subjects to audiences.

Do not include highly personal information like height, weight, marital status, children, and health. Think twice about putting down personal information like hobbies and interests, unless they are related in some way to achieving your Career Objective or are a requirement for the job. For example, an interest in photography is probably only relevant if it is a requirement or related in some way to the job.

Education

This section deals with your formal education, starting with your highest level of education achieved and working backwards. Similar to your Work Experience, you should include the school, location, and degree (if applicable). Unlike your Work Experience, you do not have to put down the years of graduation unless you choose to.

Some rules to follow are:

- If you are currently enrolled in a program and have not completed it, specify the number of credits completed and/or an expected graduation date.
- If you are no longer enrolled but have not completed the program, specify how many credits of coursework you completed.
- It is assumed that you graduated high school if you graduated from college or have completed classes for credit at a college. If this is the case for you, you do not need to include your high school education. However, if your highest level of education is a high school diploma, be sure to include this information.

You may also choose to put down, if relevant, any professional development or continuing education you have completed. You may choose to include this under the category of Education or under a separate category (e.g., Professional Development) if there are enough entries. That said, be mindful about cluttering your resume with courses that are no longer current or irrelevant to your Career Objective or the job requirements.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Some other tips:

- You must be truthful on the resume. However, since it is usually a 1 to 2 page document you can choose what to include or not.
- You don't have to put down every job you ever had. The rule of thumb is to go back in your work history until you reach a point where any additional experience you can share becomes irrelevant to your Career Objective or has the potential to hurt you (e.g. show age).

Some suggest that you arbitrarily go back only 10 years in your work history. The pitfall with this approach is you risk misrepresenting yourself to your reader. For example, if you are 50 years old and you only go back 10 years in your work history, the interviewer will be expecting someone much younger. Ask yourself whether any information on your resume might be considered misleading. Always remember who will be reading your resume. Older experience may be listed in summary form under a heading such as Prior Experience.

- Eliminate the phrase "References Available upon Request" from the end of your resume. It is implied that you will supply references if asked
- Do not include a list of references on your resume. Those can be provided when an employer requests them. (See section on References).
- If you list your cell phone number, just be sure that your voice mail is properly activated with a professional message and that you check your voice mail frequently. Remember employers may be contacting you at any time so answer professionally or do not answer your phone if you are not in a position to talk.
- Number any page after page 1 of your resume (include your name and email address on any page after page 1).
- Don't stress to get everything on one page. It's more important that you include in your resume what needs to be on it. You can concern yourself with formatting later.
- Always check for spelling and have someone else review it too. Remember, spell check does not catch everything.
- Keep your format consistent (i.e., if you start with headings in caps and centered keep it that way throughout).
- Keep away from a wide array of type faces, especially ones that are difficult to read (e.g., italics are especially hard on the eyes). This is especially important for electronically sent resumes.

Action and Key Words

The language and the words you use make a difference in how effective your resume is. We've mentioned them both a few times so now let's take a moment to distinguish between action and key words.

Action Words: These are the words that describe your knowledge, skills, and abilities to an employer. They demonstrate actions that have benefited or will benefit an employer. Employers like to envision candidates in the position they are trying to fill. Action words are your chance to influence how potential employers envision you.

Here are some suggestions to begin with:

- Advised
- Compiled
- Critiqued
- Coached
- Designed
- Directed
- Established
- Examined
- Generated
- Guided
- Hypothesized
- Illustrated
- Improved
- Influenced
- Invented
- Motivated
- Negotiated
- Ordered
- Oversaw
- Prepared
- Recruited
- Resolved
- Supervised
- Trained
- Upgraded

Key Words: Understanding what key words are, where to find them, and how to use them are important skills for success. Employers use "key words" to sift out the best candidates to interview. If a company receives a resume that doesn't contain the required key words, it will most likely be ignored.

Most key words are nouns. While you are using action words to describe what you did, employers are using nouns to describe what skills and experience they want. You can find a job's key words in the job posting you are applying to. You can also find them in the journals and magazines for the specific industry. Key words vary based on the industry in which you are interested and, most importantly, the timeframe involved. Years ago, programmers who worked on large computers were called mainframe programmers. Now, the term "mainframe" has been replaced with "network programmers or network architects." Being aware of this updated vocabulary can be the difference between a successful or unsuccessful job search.

Now it's time to develop your resume. We'll start by doing an exercise to help you further develop and refine your Accomplishment Statements.

Exercise 17: Accomplishment statements for my resume

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Go back to the previous Accomplishment Exercise (page 37) and determine how many of your accomplishments are appropriate for your resume. Your goal is to write the accomplishment statements you choose as they would appear on your resume.

Follow these rules:

- Remember P-A-R. Focus on the A-ction and R-esult. Ask yourself: “What did you do and what happened?”
- Start each accomplishment statement with an action verb. Remember these statements are going to be in the past tense. A list of action verbs is included on the next page. Try to write each accomplishment statement as a 1-2 line phrase.
- There is no right or wrong number of accomplishments. More important is to consider how relevant and recent the accomplishment is in relation to your Career Objective. The key is about striking balance between too many and too few. Listing 15 accomplishment statements may seem thorough but it can be overwhelming to your reader, causing them to skip over some.

Exercise 18: My resume worksheet

Here is where you can draft your resume by using your accomplishment statements from Exercise 17 and filling in the blanks. Use extra sheets of paper if needed.

HEADING

Name _____
City, State _____
Phone Number _____
Email Address _____

JOB TITLE

Consider using bulleted areas of expertise, skills, abilities, qualities here. To keep the columns even, usually 4 in two columns; 6 in two or three columns; 8 in two columns; or 9 maximum in three columns works best.

-
-

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

WORK EXPERIENCE

Company Name _____, Location _____ Dates _____

Job Responsibilities _____

Accomplishments

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

Company Name _____ Location _____ Dates _____

Job Responsibilities

Accomplishments

- _____

- _____

- _____

Professional Affiliations, Technology Skills, Languages, etc.

EDUCATION

Cover Letters

Because so many positions are posted online, many job seekers have stopped using cover letters. While we strongly advise against spending all of your time applying to job postings online (see Section on Networking), you will be applying to open positions in many ways, so here is our advice on cover letters.

About one-third of recruiters will tell you that they never look at cover letters. Another third will tell you that they won't look at a resume without a cover letter. The remainder will tell you that they'll look at a cover letter if they think the resume is a good fit.

As a result, having a cover letter can help you while not having one can hurt you. So, unless the job posting explicitly says no cover letters, we recommend including a tailored, well-written cover letter with all job applications. In fact, some employers will carefully review cover letters to determine if job seekers can write and spell.

There are several types of effective cover letters:

- Classic "T" Cover Letter
- Skills or Strengths Based Letter
- Master Cover Letter

Classic "T" Cover Letter

In a classic "T" cover letter, the job seeker outlines employer's requirements based on the job posting and lists how their qualifications meet those requirements like this:

Dear Ms. Doe

I am writing to apply for the Training Assistant position posted on the Lancaster Hospital website on May 12, 2018. As the following comparison shows, I believe my qualifications are an excellent match with your requirements.

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

Three to five years experience

Healthcare experience

Knowledge of training resources

MY QUALIFICATIONS

Five years experience administering all training-related activities for large hospital system

Worked a total of ten years in various capacities at two large hospital systems

Researched, purchased, and administered numerous training-related products and services for large organization.

I am particularly interested in this position because it would allow me to utilize my training experience and healthcare knowledge in a hospital setting. In addition, Lancaster Hospital has a reputation for both high quality care and a corporate culture that supports employee development which are both important factors to me as I evaluate potential opportunities.

I look forward to hearing from you to discuss the position in further detail. If you wish to contact me, I can be reached at 215-555-1212 or by email at robertsmith123@gmail.com. Thank you,

Robert Smith

Strengths or Highlights Cover Letter

Mr. John Williams
Manager, Human Resources
York General Hospital
York, PA 11235

Dear Mr. Williams:

I found the ad for your Training Specialist position on Idealist.com and would like to formally apply for the position. As you will see on my attached resume, my experience and background appear to be an excellent match with your requirements.

In my role as a Training Assistant at Johnson & Johnson, I have acquired an extensive knowledge of training resources and technology. This has allowed me to successfully research and recommend the purchase of numerous training-related products and services for the organization. In particular, I was instrumental in selecting and implementing our current Learning Management System. In addition to assisting our IT department with implementation, I have provided technical support for the system to both internal and external customers.

I am particularly interested in this position because it would allow me to utilize my training experience and healthcare knowledge in a hospital setting. In addition, York Hospital has a reputation for both high quality care and a corporate culture that supports employee development which are both important factors to me as I evaluate potential opportunities.

I look forward to speaking with you to discuss the position in further detail. If you wish to contact me, I can be reached at 215-555-1212 or by email at robertsmith123@gmail.com.

You will notice that neither cover letter says that the job seeker will follow up with the employer. That is because many employers now say "no phone calls" with online job postings because they get inundated with calls for open positions. As a result, you are often better off finding an inside contact through your networking effort (see Networking section) than to hound HR departments about their open positions.

If the posting does not explicitly forbid phone calls, you can follow up by phone about a week after you submit your application, to check in to determine where things stand with your application and the position. Many employers now have an applicant tracking system that will let you know where your application stands.

For smaller employers who accept applications via email, it is fine to follow up by phone or email a week after applying to check in regarding the position to show that you are still interested and to make sure that you didn't miss a phone call or attempt to reach you.

Master Cover Letter

To make it easier to tailor your cover letter to specific opportunities, it often helps to have a “master cover letter” that includes a “master list” of statements about your various skills and qualifications that you can cut and paste into a “T” letter or skills focused cover letter. Remember that a cover letter should be used to highlight key things about your background that are the top selling points for this particular position and company and should not be a summary of your resume.

References

Although you won't be listing your professional references on your resume, it is still important that you have between 3 and 5 of them. Good references can attest to the quality of your work, your work ethic, your integrity, your reliability, etc. They may include but are not limited to:

- Former managers
- Former co-workers
- Vendors or sales people you've worked with
- Internal/external customers
- People you have supervised
- Former teachers
- People with name recognition (e.g., the president of the local bank)

A good rule of thumb is to ensure two of your references are managers to whom you have reported. That said, only provide references you are certain will give you positive reviews. Do not use a former manager if you think they may give negative feedback.

Be wary of using political figures since you never can tell the politics of the person reading your list. Other inadvisable choices include family members, neighbors, or friends who have never seen you in a work situation.

A good format to use as you list your references might be:

1. Mr. Steven Jones
Title (if appropriate)
Company (if appropriate)
Address (optional)
Phone Number
Email address
Person's relationship to you (e.g., Mr. Jones was my former supervisor at ____)

It is best to have 3-5 references in case one cannot be reached by an employer.

Before submitting your references to a perspective employer:

- Ask the person for permission before giving their name and contact info.
- Confirm their information and the telephone number they prefer you to use.
- Give them a copy of your resume with important information highlighted.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- Tell them what time you think they might be receiving a call and provide information on the company and individual to expect the call from.

Think how damaging it would be if, when a potential employer contacted them, your reference acted surprised or, worse, did not even remember who you are!

Who will your references be?

Exercise 19: My Reference List

Make a list of at least five people who you will ask about being a reference for you.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

LinkedIn

The second step of the Action Phase is tackling LinkedIn. LinkedIn should be the core of your online brand as you manage your career for the long term, as well as while you are in active job-search mode. It's an important way for you to be visible and be found by recruiters and companies looking for talent. A networking site for professionals, LinkedIn has more than 500 million members in more than 200 countries. It offers users, most of whom pay nothing for the service, a chance to hone and increase their connections to others who can best help them professionally.

Why has LinkedIn become so important for professionals and job seekers?

Think of it this way. If you were a recruiter, would you rather sift through 500 resumes from an online posting or use an advanced search from your LinkedIn corporate account to find a small but accurate cluster of candidates? Companies are so smitten with the talent they can find on LinkedIn that they pay big bucks for "super user" access, available only to corporate users. Having a strong LinkedIn profile is paramount if you are seeking any kind of professional position.

Joseph's People maintains a LinkedIn Group, open to the public, regardless of whether you are a member. Once you have a profile, we encourage you to go to our LinkedIn group at <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/60688/> and ask to join.

Exercise 20: My LinkedIn Profile

Let's begin the process. If you don't already have a profile on LinkedIn, go to www.linkedin.com and sign up. The first thing you should do is fully optimize your LinkedIn profile by completing your profile in its entirety. Here are the elements you want to be sure to address:

- **A professional photo.** According to LinkedIn, seeing a photo make recruiters 17 times more likely to click on your profile.
- **Headline** Also include a captivating headline, correct industry and location, strong job titles and experience, projects, certifications, awards, publications, skills and recommendations. If you list more than one professional position, you will increase your visibility 12 times.
- **Use key words in your profile.** These are the words recruiters use to find you. Look at profiles of successful people who work in similar fields. See which key words they are using and emulate them! LinkedIn allows users to create a compelling text-and-multimedia narrative of their life and work. It can be updated as needed, can be any length, and will often pop up in a Web search of the user's name. Think about what words you would use to search for someone like you.
- **Build your network.** That is what LinkedIn is all about: linking with other professionals. Start connecting with people you know – former colleagues, bosses, vendors, suppliers, salespeople, recruiters, friends, family, Joseph's People connections,

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

alumni, and parents from your kid's school. To add contacts to your network, you will need to request people to join your network. We recommend that you write a tailored note to those you ask to join your network as opposed to using the default message. You should strive for at least 150 connections and keep working to expand your network thereafter. The point of LinkedIn is not to amass the greatest number of contacts, but rather to connect with those you know and trust, who then can introduce you to others you may wish to meet. Don't accept every invitation to join someone's network of contacts. Find out why they asked to connect to you and see if you are comfortable adding add them to contacts.

- **Join groups.** You'll find them by searching for names and key words in the search bar at the top of the screen. Once you participate in a group, you can offer advice, contacts and news articles to group members, many of whom are likely to share your interests and career goals. You can join as many as 50 groups, so be sure to add as many relevant groups as you like.
- **Volunteering:** LinkedIn also has a section for volunteer work that allows you to add unpaid work experience. Take advantage of this section to highlight skills you have used when volunteering.
- **Skills:** This section allows you to add skills that you possess using standard terminology. Be sure to add your skills to this section because recruiters often use the standard terminology when searching for candidates.
- **Recommendations:** Once you have filled out your LinkedIn profile, you can request recommendations from previous colleagues, customers or supervisors. While some people are uncomfortable asking for recommendations, it is a way to reconnect with colleagues and previous bosses and it adds credibility to your description of your accomplishments if someone is willing to vouch for you.
- **Customized URL:** We recommend that you customize your LinkedIn URL. When you sign up for a LinkedIn account, you are automatically assigned a profile address that includes LinkedIn.com and string of numbers. To make it easier to remember, you may customize this address to include some version of your name. To do this, when editing your profile, look for "edit your public profile and URL" which allows you to personalize the URL for your profile.

Whether you are a beginner just embracing this newer technology or an advanced user, there is so much LinkedIn can offer you in advancing your current career or starting a new one. Just keep in mind that it is ultimately you and how you approach your job search that will determine your success. No technology can replace you.

Asking people to connect with you online:

- Be yourself
- Have a reason to connect with someone and let the person know
- Don't send a generic invitation to connect on LinkedIn or any other social media tool – make it personal!
- Ask your connections to help you connect with someone else and vice versa
- It is not about how many LinkedIn connections you have; it is about the quality of the connections that you have

Networking Business Card

The third step in the Action Phase is creating a business card. While this step may seem counterintuitive if you are unemployed, a business card remains the best method to easily and memorably connect with people. You cannot always give someone your resume. But you can always give someone a business card, following up with a phone call or resume if appropriate. You can also give these cards to family and friends so that they can pass them along to their contacts when an opportunity arises.

If you are pursuing more than one career path, it will be advantageous for you to have a separate business card for each path. The rule of thumb is one card per job path, but no more than two or three at most. It is difficult to navigate so many options at once – and even harder to create a public profile on LinkedIn if you are pursuing a wide range of career paths.

While designing your business card, be mindful of these points:

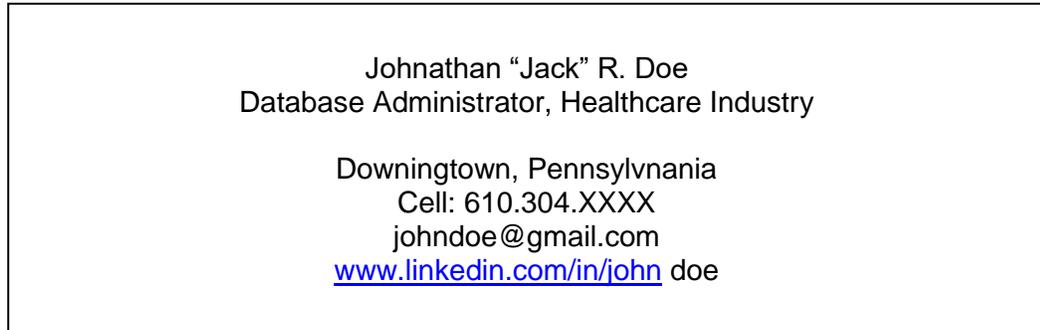
- **Be professional.** Your business card reflects you in the business world. Design it as an advertisement of your skills. Don't be cute or silly. And don't print anything on the reverse side. Leave off your home address, but include your LinkedIn address, URL or Twitter address. Just remember, if you post personal information on Twitter, your URL, or Facebook, do not include those addresses on your business card.
- **Photo.** Including a photo may disqualify you from a job. Companies are very Nervous about being accused of discrimination. Putting your photo on your Business card may cause you more harm than good. It's just not necessary.
- **Be strategic in your job description.** Be specific enough that someone who looks at the card later will recall what kind of work you do, but not so specific that you buttonhole yourself. In the business card example below, adding "Healthcare Industry" to "Database Administrator" provides just enough clarity to be memorable.
- **Include easy, reliable contact information.** If you use your cell phone, be sure to answer it professionally all the time. If you include your email, be sure you check it regularly.

Once you've designed your business cards, they can be printed inexpensively at any copy store or for free at www.vistaprint.com where you pay only shipping.

Remember, business cards left in boxes in your drawer do nothing to help you get a position. Give them out often and freely! And be sure to ask for cards in return so you can add your new contacts to your LinkedIn network.

Exercise 21: My networking business card

Here is an example of a business card. What will your business card look like? Take a moment to sketch out some ideas below or on a separate piece of paper.



Communication Methods

The fourth step of the Action Phase addresses your communication with potential employers. Your cell phone and email are the two most common ways an employer will get in contact with you. Land lines are becoming obsolete so no need to include them on your resume or your business card.

Cell Phone

Texting has become a popular method of communication. When it comes to employers, however, it is unlikely you are going to get a return response by text. Young job seekers often find texting more comfortable and often do not even set up their mailboxes on their cell phones. This is a serious mistake! Unless the employer tells you otherwise, the first communication your potential employer is likely to have with you is by cell phone.

When you answer your phone, do it professionally all the time. You cannot be sure who is going to be on the other end of the line. When you answer use your name. "This is Jane Doe." The employer wants to know immediately that they have reached the correct person.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

If you are unavailable to answer, then your message becomes very important. Your cell phone should not ring more than 5 times. Longer ring times discourage employers whose time is important to them. Again, begin with your name. Your message needs to be easily understood so speak slowly, carefully and give your future employer enough information, but not TOO much information.

Here is an example of a professional message: "You have reached Jane Doe. I'm not able to take your call at the moment, but it is important to me. Please leave your name and your number. If there is a particularly good time to return your call, let me know.

Be sure to check your messages at least twice a day. A missed message, discovered a day later, could cost you the job you want.

Email

Employers frequently utilize email. They are likely to respond to you via email, or they may ask YOU to respond via email. If that is the case, then your email address becomes very important. An employer who is expecting your response needs to be able to see your email immediately. A good email requires that it contain your name. It should be easy for your employer to see it is YOU.

If you do not already have a Gmail account, you may want to consider setting one up now. Internet suppliers (Verizon, Comcast, etc.) can change and, if your email is registered with them, it will change too. In addition, if your email address is with an old provider such as AOL or Hotmail, consider switching so that you look less dated. With a Gmail account, your email will remain constant regardless of who your supplier is—making your contact information more reliable and minimizing the need to reprint resumes and business cards. Additionally, Gmail is free.

Some good email address examples:

John-JackDoe@gmail.net
JackRDoe@gmail.net

Some bad email address examples:

Jack1234@gmail.net
Corvetteman@gmail.net

The 30 Second Introduction

The next step is developing your 30 second introduction. Also called the Elevator Speech, the 30 Second Intro answers the question, "Tell me about yourself." If you answer this question in a prepared and professional manner, chances are good that you will continue to make a positive impression with whomever you are speaking. However, if you do not, it will be awfully hard to recover.

Here are some answers that are neither appropriate nor professional and should never be used:

- "What would you like to know?"
- "Would you like to know about me personally or professionally?"
- "That's a good question; I've never really thought about that...."
- "Well let me start at the beginning. I was born in West Chester 38 years ago...."

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Here are some points you might consider including in your 30 Second Intro:

- **Name.** Remember, though, the other person may already know your name.
- **Your profession.** You may also choose to include here, or at a later point, what you would like to do in the future, if it is different from what you do now.
- **Where you work or previously worked.** You may want to include your job title.
- **Why you left your last job.** Include this only if it is helpful for the person to know, but never if it was under negative circumstances.
- **What you are doing now.** Although this may be beneficial in a networking meeting, it may not be appropriate during a job interview.
- **Your strengths.** Present two or three strengths that are relevant to either the position you are applying for or the person you are networking with.

Bear in mind, if you are in an interview, do not address:

- **What you would like to do in the future.** This is not appropriate since your goal (for the purpose of the interview) is to get the job you're applying for.
- **Where you have looked up to this point.**
- **The purpose of the meeting or how the person can help you.** This is self-explanatory in an interview.

One of the biggest mistakes that people make when crafting their 30 Second Intro is memorizing it. The first problem with this is that it will sound rehearsed. The second problem is that, like your resume, your 30 Second Intro needs to fit the person with whom you are speaking as well as the situation (e.g., interview, networking). What you say during a networking meeting is not the same during an interview and vice versa.

Here's an example of what a 30 Second Intro at a networking meeting might sound like:

Person you are meeting with: "Mary, why don't you tell me a little about yourself?"

Mary: "Thanks for asking. I'm learning and development professional with over 15 years of experience designing and delivering learning solutions for both internal and external clients (what you do). Most recently I worked at Bentley Corporation, where I was the Director of Training for the IT Division (where you worked). Due to a downturn in business, there was a lay-off and my position was eliminated (why you left your last job).

Throughout my career, I have found that one of my strengths is my ability to use my knowledge of both IT and training to design technical training programs that make it easy for non-technical employees to use technology. (strengths). I'm taking this opportunity to explore a slightly different direction using my knowledge of both technology and training to help a nonprofit organizations achieve their goals (what I'd like to do in the future).

Some of the organizations I have researched include The United Way, The Red Cross and Big Brothers/Big Sisters (Where you have looked). I know you have a great deal of experience in the non-profit world so that is why I am excited to speak with you today (why I am here)."

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- Newspapers & Professional Journals
- Job Fairs
- Placement Offices (School/Government)

The “Hidden” or Unpublished Job Market

The Hidden or Unpublished Job Market is much larger than you might guess. This unpublished job market includes but is not limited to:

- Internally posted jobs
- Future job openings and known needs that have not yet crystallized into posted positions
- Newly created jobs
- Openings at smaller companies that may not have the resources to post online
- Openings as a result of someone else leaving
- Openings due to an upcoming change or sale.

These jobs are often published internally, if at all, but are known to employees at organization where the need exists. When you hear people speak of the importance of networking, this is the main reason. The Hidden Job Market used to make up 80% or more of open positions, but, despite the prevalence of online job postings, it is still thought to comprise at least 60% of all positions.

Most job seekers spend most of their time applying to jobs online under the mistaken impression that all available jobs are posted there. As a result, they chase after the most visible jobs while many other less publicized opportunities go unexplored.

Now that we have taken a glimpse of the Job Market, you will need to devise a plan to infiltrate it and a strategy that will put you in the best possible position to do so effectively. Let's start by discussing the two best ways you can market yourself through Networking & Online.

Networking

In recent years, networking has gotten a somewhat bad reputation because people think networking is all about selling yourself to strangers or nagging your friends about job openings. Properly done, networking is all about the power of connecting with people to gather information about what is going on in your industry to uncover companies and people who might be interested in someone with your background whether or not they have any current openings.

If you think of it as research and remember that it is all about Advice, Information and Referrals (A-I-R), your networking effort will be much more successful.

Connecting One on One

The first, and usually the most helpful, sort of formal networking is arranging a meeting or phone call with someone in the field or industry that you are interested in who may be able to share some useful information with you. You, in return, can keep them

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

posted about your progress but also ask them if there is anything you can do for them. Connecting is a two-way street.

Before the networking meeting, research the person and prepare some questions that you'd like to ask. The goal of the meeting is to get to know the person you are connecting with as well as having them get to know you.

- Have a goal to accomplish through the meeting or call
- Refine your 30 second intro for the person you are meeting with
- Be aware of the time and stick to the amount of time you have requested
- If in person, exchange cards
- Follow up with a thank you email and LinkedIn invite.

Sample agenda for networking meeting:

- Introductions
- Share goals of the meeting
- Ask and answer questions, ask for and give advice, make suggestions
- Ask what you can do to help
- Connections and information – mutually share connections and information that benefit each other
- Closing, thanks and follow up

Sample questions to ask at a one-on-one networking meeting:

- How did you get your start in this function, business, field?
- Where do you see your profession, function, industry going in the future?
- What skills are the most helpful to have now and in the future for your role?
- What training and education is needed to succeed in this function or industry?
- What do you enjoy most about your role, function or company?
- What resources, professional organizations, networking groups have been the most useful to you?
- How can I learn more about this role, function, industry?
- Do you have any advice or suggestions for me based on what we have discussed?
- What type of person is most successful at your company?
- What is happening in your industry?
- What are important future trends for your industry and/or your function?
- Can you recommend other people who would be important for me to talk to?

Exercise 23: My networking list

You can get started by listing ten people with whom you can network. Don't be too quick to dismiss someone because you haven't seen them in a while or you don't think they can help you. Sometimes, help comes from the least expected sources. Do not include those with whom you have already shared about your job search. Be sure to locate their contact info. However, true networking doesn't really begin until you move out from those you already know to new contacts that are from outside your inner and second circle of acquaintances. Your goal is to ultimately grow your list to 100 people or more.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Contact Name	Phone	Email Address
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____

Remember, networking is about establishing relationships, not about asking for a job. Although you are reaching out because of your situation, remember to be respectful and not pressure your contacts to do anything they are unable or unwilling to do.

Networking at Group Events

Anywhere you socialize can be a potential networking opportunity. However, if you are going to a formal networking event, a job fair, or a business card exchange, be sure to bring:

- Your business cards
- Pad of paper/pen
- Several copies of your resume in case someone asks you for a copy

Dress appropriately. Consider with whom you will be speaking, where you are having the meeting, and the nature of the event. In most cases, “business casual” attire is recommended (see page 86 on business attire).

Here are some steps to take to prepare for networking at groups events:

- Have a goal to accomplish through the event
- Research the organization holding the event
- Research the people attending the event to determine who you want to meet
- Refine your elevator speech for the event and people
- Make sure to focus on the people you want to meet and don't try to meet everyone; be purposeful
- Ask a question, share information
- Ask for their networking card and share yours
- Follow up with people you want to continue to build a relationship with – thank you, LinkedIn invite, meeting/call.

Questions to get you started when meeting people at an event:

- Tell me about yourself
- Have you ever been to an event with this group before?
- What brings you here tonight?
- What motivated you to come here today?
- My name is Amy, What is yours?
- These events are can be a little bit awkward, true?
- I'm an accountant, what line of work are you in?

Exercise 24: Groups and places I can network

Where are some places or groups where you can network?

Informal Networking

Think about the process you use to find a good new doctor or a plumber. We often ask our friends for recommendations, maybe post a note in a neighborhood social media group While we can search on line for recommendations, we usually much prefer personal recommendations from friends or acquaintances over someone we find online. Employers feel the same way. They would almost always rather find new employees through referrals

Utilizing the Internet During Job Search

The Internet is the second method of marketing yourself. By having an excellent LinkedIn profile, identifying companies that you would like to work for and

Job seekers will often devote over 80% of their time searching and applying to online postings. However, while the Internet has dramatically changed how we approach job hunting, keep this hard, cold statistic in mind: less than 10% of all opportunities are obtained through the internet and more than 60% are obtained through some form of networking.

As a result, developing a plan about how you intend to use your time online can be very productive.

Exercise 25: My Internet Plan

Develop a plan for how you are going to use the Internet effectively in your job search.

1. **How much time per week will you use for online activities?** _____ hours
2. **What days and times will you devote to internet activities?** It is best to use evening and weekend hours for this activity so you can devote your weekdays to networking, etc.

Which general search engines will you check and how often? Once or twice per week is usually sufficient.

3. **Which niche sites will you check and how often?** Sign up for targeted alerts from key job boards and update them make them specific so you don't waste time looking through many job postings that are not a fit for you.

4. **Which target company websites will you check for openings and how often?**

5. **What are other ways you can use the internet to research companies, occupations or industries?**

6. **What are ways you can use the internet to improve your visibility or networking efforts (for example, LinkedIn)?**

Posted Openings through Company Websites

Online job board and utilizing company websites to apply online is seemingly “the way it is” for more and more employers. Most large organizations do use on-line portals for application processing and a software system (e.g., Taleo) to manage the hundreds or thousands of resumes they receive across their enterprise. Most job seekers who have applied through these on-line sites have had their patience tried. Most web applications will require a minimum half hour to submit. Many posted openings will attract over 100 to 300 applicants, so the applicants are screened amid tight competition. As a result, do not apply for positions that do not appear to be a good fit or for which you have less than 80% of the qualifications. You will save yourself time and will have a better success rate for the positions to which you do apply.

Company web-sites are the preferred hiring channel for large organizations. It is a way that companies protect the integrity of the hiring process and indeed the organization itself to ensure that equal opportunity practices are adhered to. In fact, if you do find a position listed on a job board such as Indeed.com, you may have better luck applying to the position directly from the company's website instead of clicking through and applying on the public job board. Just exit the job board and search for the company career website to find the opening.

Other Places to Look for Position Openings

Beyond online job boards, there are many additional locations to look for position openings. Do not overlook these sources for potential job openings:

- Alumni Associations
- State/Government postings
- State unemployment postings
- Journals/Magazines
- Bulletin Boards (grocery stores, churches, schools, etc.)
- Try to come up with some others (ask friends, family members, volunteers and members of Joseph's People)

Organizing Your Search

It is important to remain organized on this Journey. If you haven't already, you'll want to take some time now to create an organization system. Your organization system can be as simple as index cards in a box or a contact organizer, such as Outlook, on your phone or computer. Choose something you can use easily, quickly, and long-term. You will want to make sure it tracks:

- Resumes sent (include version, company, person, job title, and date)
- Cover letter included with resume
- Follow up dates (for any position you have applied for)
- Interview dates and result of the interview
- Follow up dates for interviews
- Networking contacts, phone calls, and meetings
- Follow up dates with contacts

Using Professional Job Search Assistance

Joseph's People suggests that you be EXTREMELY careful when engaging and paying an outside resource to assist in your job search. Many dishonest, as well as less qualified individuals, line their pockets with the money of innocent job seekers. Before you engage an outside resource to assist with your job search, contact Joseph's People or your Joseph's People chapter to validate the honesty and capability of the person or organization you are planning to contract.

Before you pay a professional, however, be sure you have used all the resources Joseph's People can offer. We have more than 5,000 graduates and hundreds of professional volunteers inside and outside our groups to draw upon. Unlike other resources, we are always 100% free and, if we cannot help you, we can probably refer you to a professional yet inexpensive source. Remember though, in the end, you have to get the job; no outside professional can do that for you.

Recruiters

Throughout your job search, you will come in contact with many types of recruiters. It helps to understand the different types of recruiters that you may encounter because they have different motivations.

Internal or Corporate Recruiters: Internal recruiters are likely to be employees or consultants working in a company's Human Resources Department. You typically meet them during the hiring process. They are busy individuals who often receive and screen hundreds of resumes on a daily or weekly basis. One way to help internal recruiters is by making it easy for them to see how your background fits the job for which you are applying. Tweak your resume and cover letter to clearly tie it to the position description. They generally only give resumes 30 seconds or less, so don't make it hard for them to figure out how you fit in.

Contingency Recruiters: This type of recruiter probably contacted you directly because they came across your online profile (LinkedIn or a Job Board, for example) or because someone suggested you to them. Companies pay outside recruiters to find the right person based on those companies' needs. Outside recruiters do not solicit resumes to keep on file, moving from one self-contained search to the next.

Retained Search Recruiters: Another you may have come across is a Search Firm that has been retained to solicit and interview for a particular position by company. They may appear in an ad for a company job. Many small and large businesses use search firms to hire for high level positions or to distance themselves from the process of hiring if they do not have an HR department.

When working with outside recruiters, be sure to ask:

- How long the recruiter and/or firm has been in business
- Whether the recruiter and/or firm has made any placements at the company in question before
- Which company(s) your resume will be going to before anything is sent out.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Make sure:

- the recruiter understands the type of company, position, industry, salary, etc. you are interested in and which ones you are not.
- your resume will not be changed without your permission.
- you NEVER sign any kind of exclusionary contract.
- you NEVER pay for the services of an outside recruiter.

Staffing or Temporary Agencies

Offering an alternative to full-time employees, temporary (also known as “temp”) agencies have become increasingly popular with companies. A candidate is hired on a temporary or contract basis, without benefits. After the candidate’s term expires, the company may decide whether they would like to keep him as a full-time employee. This “temp to perm” process is a good way to get your foot in the door of a company you might not otherwise be able to infiltrate. A significant number of our Joseph’s People found their permanent jobs by starting in a temporary position.

Other Types of Professional Assistance

In addition to recruiters, there are a number of other types of professionals you may encounter during your job search.

Career Counselors: Career Counselors help those who are unemployed, underemployed, or in a career transition determine their career goals and develop a plan to achieve them. Some career counselors offer testing like the Strong Interest Inventory, world of Work Inventory or Myers-Briggs type indicator to help in this process. Career counselors may work independently, while others may be part of a larger organization. Most operate on a fee basis, with some offering a sliding scale.

Coaches: Coaches are professionals who provide personal support to their clients on life decisions and problems and some focus on career issues. They often help individuals make life decisions that impact their success. The coaching relationship can range from a short period of time to one that is more ongoing. There is almost always a fee for this service. Please remember that Joseph’s People may be able to offer services which are similar to a coach and will never cost you money.

Outplacement Firms: Outplacement firms are almost always hired by a company to work with separated or laid-off employees. Depending on the program that is purchased, this can range from individual counseling for three to six months to a one-time workshop on how to find a job. Your previous employer may offer you outplacement support if you were laid off. It can be quite valuable, so take advantage of this service, if offered. Commonly used outplacement firms are Right Management and Lee Hecht Harrison.

Job Fairs

Before you attend any job fair, determine who will be there and why. The best job fairs are those that are attended by company HR Departments. There are fewer of them, but they are far more useful to you than, for example, events for recruiters to collect resumes.

Be prepared to answer these questions:

- **Tell me about yourself.** Use your 30 second intro.
- **What are you looking for?** Ask yourself, “Who am I speaking to and what do I perceive this company’s needs to be?” Present yourself in a way that fits their needs.
- **What salary are you looking for?** Employers will often ask this question at a job fair or in screening interviews in order to determine if the potential candidate is looking for a salary that is in the right range for the position. Be prepared to offer a salary range that is in line with salaries being offered for that type of position. To identify that range, do your research. Once again, www.glassdoor.com is a good source.
- **What do you know about our company?** Do your research beforehand.
- **Why are you looking for work?** Why did you leave your last job? Was it because of downsizing, better opportunities, or something else? Be honest, but remember to keep your explanation concise and positive.

Remember:

- **Use job fairs to make personal contacts.** Focus on getting the names of individuals that will be helpful in the future when you want to make contact with that organization.
- **Bring enough resumes for representatives of your target companies** as well as any other unexpected but advantageous companies you may encounter.
- **Review the websites of companies you are interested in** speaking with. Gather some background information and learn about any specific jobs available.
- **Consider attending workshops or seminars on subjects like interviewing** or resume-writing, if offered.
- **Bring business cards.** And make sure you leave with the business cards of new contacts.
- **Dress as if you are going to an interview.**
- **Go with a plan.** If it is to see four specific companies, make sure they are the ones you see first, before you visit any others. Don't waste time—it's too valuable!
- **Find out with whom you should keep in touch** regarding current or future openings at each of your target companies.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- **Consider sending thank you letters** to company representatives you met. Never underestimate the value of a thank you.
- **Always be positive!**

***The kind of beauty I want most is the hard-to-get kind that comes from within
– strength, courage, dignity.
Ruby Dee***

***I'm convinced that half of what separates the successful entrepreneurs
from the non-successful ones is pure perseverance.
Steve Jobs***

The Interview Phase

Your hard work has begun to pay off once you start having interviews for job openings. Often job seekers spend days preparing their resumes and many hours applying for positions, but spend little time preparing for interviews. Do not make that mistake! Advance preparation for interviewing will help you to make a good impression.

There are many types of interviews that you may encounter and a variety of technology that is being used to interview candidates. However, the most common types of interviews are:

- Screening interviews (by phone or video conferencing)
- Face to face interviews

Screening Interviews

Companies typically use a screening interview to narrow their list of candidates to people who meet their key, minimum qualifications. Screening interviews usually take place by phone or by video conferencing platform such as Skype. Receiving a request for a screening interview is excellent news. It means you are in the running. If you master the skills to do phone and video interviews, you are far more likely to win a face-to-face interview.

How to prepare for a screening interview

Review the job description and prepare some stories from your own experiences that align with the duties and qualifications of the job. In addition, research some general or common phone interview questions and be prepared to answer them. The job website Glassdoor allows you to search interview questions by both job title and company. Frequently updated, the questions are submitted anonymously by people who have been interviewed and often include the response given. Go to this link for one good example: <http://www.glassdoor.com/Interview/Express-Scripts-Interview-Questions-E2212.htm>

It is likely that your interviewer will be using a specific set of questions, asking all of the candidates for the same information. You can become familiar with these screening questions and how they flow by viewing some questionnaires available on-line.

One good site for you to review is: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/phone-interview-questions-and-answers-2061217> (and a quick Google search will yield many more resources for you to review).

Preparing for a phone interview

- Choose an interruption-free time and place. Make sure it is someplace you feel comfortable.
- Have your resume in clear view, including some accomplishments.
- Wear professional clothes. How you project yourself, even over the phone, is affected by how you look. Keep a smile on your face (will also help your phone presence).
- Have a pen and paper handy for taking notes.
- Make sure you have investigated the company and have easy-to-read notes about them; take notes from their web page and the job description.
- Turn off your call-waiting so that there are no interruptions.
- Have some job-related questions prepared to ask the interviewer (we do not recommend that you ask about benefits questions during a phone interview; better to focus on the job and/or the company). Some examples of expected questions during a phone screen might be: "Could you tell me more about the corporate culture at your company?" or "Could you tell me more the rest of the team there?"

Since they don't have dropped calls or static issues, land lines are ideal for phone interviews (if possible). If you don't have access to a land line, be sure that your cell phone signal is strong in the location you have selected to take the phone interview.

***It is easy—terribly easy—to shake a man's faith in himself.
To take advantage of that, to break a man's spirit is devil's work.***
George Bernard Shaw

During your phone interview remember to:

- **Speak slowly and clearly.** Try not to use too many filler noises like ummm...ahhh...well...etc. If you are not sure what to say next, take a moment to collect your thoughts. If the gap feels too long, say, "Great question! Let me think for a minute to find the best example."
- **Address the person by their title** (Dr., Mr., Ms., or Mrs.). Do not use their first name unless they ask you to (or have introduced themselves by their first name).
- **Be businesslike and professional.** Do not make jokes.
- **Listen and wait your turn to speak.** Do not interrupt the interviewer.
- **Be quiet.** Do not make noises like moving your chair or tapping your pencil. Don't chew gum, drink, or eat. If you need to cough or sneeze, simply excuse yourself and move on with the phone screen as soon as you are able.
- **Be thorough.** Ask for the in-person interview. Don't let the interview end without you knowing exactly what the next step is and when and how it will take place. Get complete contact information for the person interviewing you and be sure to thank them, first at the end of your call, and shortly thereafter, via email.

Video Interviews

Video interviews are becoming much more common because they can save a company both time and money. It is very likely that you will be invited to a video interview at some point during your career search so it is best to be prepared.

If you are working through a staffing or temp firm, your video interview may be held in the agency's offices; if so, plan to arrive early so you have time to get settled. Be sure to clarify how to use the video equipment and ask if you have any questions. In that setting, you are representing the agency and they want you to succeed; they will welcome the chance to make sure you're all set.

If your video interview will take place at home, we recommend that you hold a trial run a day or two before your official interview. That will give you time to make any needed adjustments (or solicit assistance from an expert). Since it will be video, the interviewer will anticipate that you'll be on camera, so be sure you have access to a reliable webcam (many laptops have built-in webcams). Only use your phone if you cannot access a laptop or desktop webcam; the video quality on a phone is less reliable and you want to present yourself as dependable, reliable and resourceful.

Find out what system they will use (Skype, Google Hangout/Meet, etc) and test both the video and audio components of the set-up. Mount your camera so it aligns with you at eye level; that will be the most flattering angle for most people.

Make sure your settings are tidy and professional looking; remove unneeded clutter and if possible, set yourself up so you are visible against a plain wall (or in a tidy, office setting). Be sure that you are facing the main lighting source; if you are sitting with the light behind you, you may appear as little more than a silhouette to your audience.

Dress professionally, as if you were interviewing in person rather than online. While your camera angle will likely remain focused on your face and upper torso, there is always the chance that you may need to stand up to retrieve some information requested by your interviewer and you don't want to look unprepared or unprofessional.

Keep to a quiet setting; as you would with any other interview, turn off or mute your phone and be sure to turn off computer notifications so you do not become distracted. And the mic maybe stronger that you think, so be careful about extra noises (like a squeaky chair or the dog playing in the background).

Make regular eye contact, again, just as if you were meeting in-person. In a video call, that means looking at the camera, not the image of the person on the screen.

Face to Face Interviews

The big day will come when you are asked to interview for a position that you have applied for. Your resume worked! You got through the two or three phone interviews. You can assume at this point that they are really interested in you. When you receive the call from a company interested in interviewing you, make sure you find out two things:

- **Who are you meeting with?**
You will probably prepare differently for an interview with the human resource manager than the hiring manager. It would also be helpful to know if the interview will be a group interview with more than one person in the room or if you will be meeting with a series of individuals, or just one person.

- **How long can you expect the interview to take?**
This helps in your mental preparation, as well as removing some of the stress for planning your day.

Elements of Interviewing Success

Like so many other aspects of this Journey, success in the interview process is as much about how you approach it mentally as it is being able to answer the interviewer's questions. If you think you are not good enough, that will be the way the interviewer perceives you. These negative thoughts will come out in your demeanor, your body language, and the lack of conviction in your voice. Think confidently and with a certain self-respect that says, "I am good enough," and you will surely come off that way to the interviewer.

Just the thought of going to an interview can trigger emotions of anxiety and excitement. Remain calm amidst your excitement, but remember, a little enthusiasm never hurt anyone. It's anxiety and stress that cause problems. You want to boost your excitement and minimize your anxiety. And the best cure for anxiety is to be prepared. Here is what you can do.

Preparing Before the Interview.

Keep a positive attitude.

Remind yourself: "The fact that I'm being asked to interview for this position means that there is something (probably a number of things) about me the company is interested in." Now is the time to prove them right!

Review the ad or posting.

Ask yourself: "What are they really looking for based on what I see in this ad or posting, as well as what I know based on my research about this company, industry, and field?"

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Do your research.

Find out as much as you can about the company, the industry, and the person you will be meeting with. Learn about the organization and what they do through their website. Research industries, positions, and trends online through key words like “accounting trends” or “manufacturing in Pennsylvania”. Check out LinkedIn for valuable information about the company and people who work there. See if your friends, family, and former co-workers might know anything about the company. You want to impress the company with how well researched you are.

And remember, one person’s bad experience at a company does not automatically discredit the entire organization. That said, if multiple people give you negative feedback, there may be an issue worth investigating before you commit yourself.

Review your resume.

Your resume most likely played an important part in getting you the interview. Look at the accomplishments and your profile, paying special attention to the areas you believe relate to the job posting requirements. Remember the two aspects of almost every job: making decisions and solving problems.

Exercise 26: Preparation for common interview questions

In this exercise, we will take a look at some of the most common questions you may be asked and should ask. As you read, consider how you would answer each question.

Questions for You to Answer

- **Tell me about yourself.**

This question is an icebreaker and an opportunity for you to pique the interviewer’s interest. Ask yourself what the interviewer needs to know about you at this point in the interview. Be prepared to deliver an attention-grabbing variation of your 30 second intro. For example, when talking about your strengths, focus on 1 or 2 that are directly related to the position you are interviewing for.

- **Why did you leave your last job?**

This is a question where the less said, the better. Although probably not the most impactful question of your interview, an unprepared response can seriously damage your chances. That’s why it’s important to have a good response ready.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Be honest, positive, and avoid any negative comments about your previous employer or co-workers. Terms like “fired”, “let go”, “we didn’t get along”, etc. are no-no’s.

If you were laid off, downsized, or are unemployed for any other reason beyond your control, consider something like this:

“I enjoyed my work at ABC Company. However, there was a downsizing and my position was eliminated. I’m now looking at this as a chance to explore some new opportunities. That’s why I was so excited to see the advertisement for this position....”

If you’re unemployed due to a more personal issue, consider using an honest yet respectful reply like this:

“Although I had a great run at ABC Company and learned quite a bit, the company decided to go in a different direction and make a change.... When I saw the advertisement for this position, I knew that this would be an exciting opportunity for me to utilize my strengths....”

- **How much money are you looking for?**

This is another question that may not intrinsically help you, but will hurt you if you are unprepared. When an interviewer asks this question, he is looking to weed candidates out. If you give too high a figure, you risk eliminating yourself from a good opportunity. If you give too low a figure, you risk presenting yourself as an inferior choice.

In answering this question, it is advisable to parry. Here are some examples:

- **Put the question back in their court.** “I’m sure you have a range in mind. Could you tell me what it is?”
 - **Defer the answer.** “Before I answer that question, I’d like to learn more about the position.”
 - **Put them at ease.** “I know your company has a great reputation and I am sure I will fit into your pay scale.”
 - **Remain open.** “Money is obviously important, but at this point in my life I’m more interested in working in a situation where I can make a difference in helping an organization grow while enjoying what I am doing. That’s why at this point my salary requirements are open.”
- **Answering questions about your salary history (or what you are currently making).**
Handle this question much like the previous one.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- **Apples and oranges.** “My former position and this one are really not comparable, so to equate the two would not really be a fair comparison. I have no doubt we can agree to a fair salary if you decide to offer me the position.”

- **Ask why.** “I’m not sure that what I made in my previous position has to do with this position. I’m sure we can come to an agreement if we get to that point in our discussion.”

- **Different industry.** “I think it’s important to understand that the industry I came from is a bit different than this one and I was at my last position for over 15 years. I was able to build up seniority there and naturally that meant I was compensated as such. I am certainly open to any discussion about salary.”

If you feel compelled to give a specific answer, consider offering a range rather than giving a single figure. Decide, based on your research, what a reasonable salary for the position would be. A good place to start is www.salary.com. You’ll want to factor in your background and experience, the industry, and the geographic location. The figure you come up with is the high spectrum of your salary range. Next, decide what the lowest salary you’d accept would be. Present these two figures as a range.

Remember, the less said, the better!

- **Why should I offer you the job?**

The secret to this question is to determine ahead of time what the company’s biggest need is and what makes you the best person to fulfill that need.

“I know from our conversation and from the posting for the position that one of the most important qualities you are looking for in the person you will be selecting is the ability to come in and hit the ground running. I have had experience doing this successfully in my last position and with my background in... I have no doubt that I can do this for you. In fact, I would be very happy to discuss this further with you.”

- **What are your strengths?**

Identify ahead of time what the company's most pressing needs are and which ones you have strengths in. This question is a huge opportunity to bridge the gap between your strengths and the company's needs.

"I have many strengths. I know you are looking for someone who has the ability to manage multiple projects. I've done exactly that for the last 10 years, so I would certainly consider that to be a strength of mine and I would be happy to go into more detail about what I accomplished in this area."

- **What are your weaknesses?**

Typically following the strengths question, this one throws most people off when a little preparation would allow you to use it to your advantage. Saying you can't think of anything is never a good answer. However, you also don't want to present yourself poorly. Best is to choose a weakness which you are working to strengthen and is not an integral part of your job. For example, you might say:

"I sometimes get a little nervous when I have to speak before large groups (Note: So does 95% of the population). So what I've done is join Toastmasters and through lots of practice I am now much less nervous and a better presenter (I saw a need and I did something about it)."

Develop Stories and Prepare for Behavioral Interviewing.

Increasingly popular among companies, behavioral interviewing is predicated on the concept that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Rather than question what you could, should, or would do in a situation, the behavioral interviewer wants to hear specific examples of how you've handled past situations. Be ready with 4 to 6 stories about your accomplishments that best match up with the employer's needs.

Before you arrive for your interview, the company has already researched the basic competencies (skills) for the job they are trying to fill. They've developed a series of questions to identify examples of times the candidate has demonstrated those basic competencies. Some common behavioral interview questions read like this:

- **Tell me about a time...** you had to make an unpopular decision?
(Dimension: decision-making)

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- **Give me an example of a time...** when you exceeded a customer's expectation? (Dimension: customer focus)
- **Tell me about a situation...** where you didn't have all the resources you needed to complete the project, but managed to completed it successfully anyway (Dimension: ingenuity)

When you respond, the interviewer is listening for:

P-A-R

P What was the **Problem** (or situation, task, challenge) you were confronted with?

A What **Action** did you take?

R What was the **Result**?

For this reason, strong answers to behavioral interview questions will probably resemble the P-A-R accomplishments already listed on your resume.

Once the interview is completed, the interviewer(s) will assign numerical scores to your answers on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). They focus on whether you demonstrated strong P-A-R principles for each basic competency they tested you on. If there were multiple interviewers, they will tally their scores, typically giving further consideration only to candidates who score at or above a pre-determined numerical value (often 3).

Anticipate the core competencies of the job you're applying for and have P-A-R stories ready. What core competencies do you think are involved in the positions you're applying for? As you rehearse your stories, ask yourself: "When was I at my very best?" or "What was the biggest sale I made or project I managed or tool I made or landscape I designed?" Employers want to hire people who make good decisions and solve problems.

Questions to ask during the interview

Always be prepared to ask questions during the interview. When asked if you have any questions, "no" is never a good answer. The best questions to ask are ones that are thoughtful and relevant to the position you are interviewing for, not questions that only focus on you, like "How many vacation days do I get?" There is a time and a place for these questions but it's usually toward the very end of the interview process or when you are offered the job.

Here are some examples of good questions to ask:

- "What would be my top priority in the first 3 months on the job?"
- "How does this position fit in with helping the organization (department) achieve its goals?"
- "How would you characterize the culture of the organization?"

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- “What strengths are you looking for in the individual you expect to hire for this position?”
- “What is the biggest challenge facing the organization (department) and what would my role be in dealing with it?”

Exercise 27: Questions for you to ask during the interview

What are some other questions you could ask?

- Personal

- Organizational

- Industry

- Other

Preparing for Interview Day

Now that you have a better understanding of the typical interview tactics and you've considered your responses, picture yourself going through the interview. Start at the beginning with the social graces (e.g., shaking hands, saying hello) and then sitting down. Think about how you want to behave. Remember, you are being evaluated the minute you meet the interviewer. Never underestimate the power of a smile. When someone extends their hand, give a firm, but not overpowering, handshake. Wait to be told where to sit.

Anticipate and Practice.

Anticipate what will happen during the interview and practice how you will deal with issues that may arise. If the position requires a lot of project management, you should expect to be asked questions about your experience managing projects. Rehearse your responses. Prepare examples that highlight your project management skills. Remember, the interviewer is interested in how you will add value to their organization. Be prepared!

Travel Light.

Get ready ahead of time. Consider bringing:

- Pencil/pen
- A folder with a pad

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

- Bring your cell phone with your calendar, but turn it off during the interview!
- Two copies of your resume
- A list of questions to ask
- Examples of previous work if it was requested prior to the interview. Don't overload yourself with irrelevant materials.
- Your list of 3 to 5 references. It's also ok to send these after the interview if requested.

Plan what you will wear.

As you plan your outfit, remember you are a guest, not an employee, at the company. Just because employees dress casually doesn't mean it is appropriate for you to do the same during an interview. It is best to dress for an interview one level above what employees typically wear. So, if casual dress is the norm, business casual would be appropriate. When in doubt, ask the recruiter since business dress has been changing rapidly. If in doubt, business attire is generally a safe choice.

For Women (Business)

- Dark business suit with slacks or skirt (if it is a formal workplace)
- Jacket and slacks separates (if less formal workplace)
- Conservative blouse (shy away from sheer, low cut, or sleeveless)
- Sheer Stockings
- Shoes (pumps work best; black works well; low heel, no open toe)
- Jewelry (Ok, but nothing distracting or dangling)
- Make-up (Ok, but understated is best)
- No perfume (someone may be allergic to your brand)
- Pocketbook or briefcase (Ok, but nothing bulky or filled with lots of "stuff") Consider bringing one or the other, but not both.
- Hair well cut, nothing exotic and no hair bobbles

For Women (Business Casual)

- Dark pants or skirt
- Conservative blouse
- Jacket (optional)
- See above

For Men (Business)

- Conservative Dark Suit (if formal workplace)
- Sports jacket and slacks (if less formal workplace)
- White or light blue shirt
- Conservative Tie (Red or blue works well)
- Dark Socks (to the knee)
- Shined dress shoes, no run-down heels or holes in the soles.
- Jewelry (minimal) none is better.
- No after shave or cologne
- Trimmed beard or mustache (if appropriate)
- Hair neatly cut, the shorter the better.
- No earrings or piercings of any kind. If you have tattoos, cover them up.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

For Men Business Casual

- Button down, spread collar, or “golf” shirt (depending on the season and company)
- Dark pants with belt
- Sport jacket (Optional)

Make sure you know where you are going.

If you have never been to the location before, map out your route and calculate how long it will take you. Set your time of departure so that you'll arrive 10 minutes before your scheduled interview time. Make sure you have the phone number of the interviewer and/or company in case you are delayed. Some good resources are www.mapquest.com and KYW radio which broadcasts traffic reports on the 2s. Better yet, if you have GPS, use it!

Arrive promptly.

Arrive neither too early nor late. Ten to fifteen minutes early is the ideal time to arrive. If you arrive earlier, wait in your car. But never be late for your interview! No matter what your excuse is, you will leave a negative impression. If you run into a serious problem, call and consider postponing the interview.

At the Interview

Once you arrive at your interview, keep these tips in mind.

- **Smile and be courteous.** Have a smile for the person who greets you, state who you are and who you are there to see. If it is a receptionist and the person has a name plate, try using the person's name in a courteous way as you do this.
- **Use the restroom.** If you have time, you may want to use the restroom, especially if the trip was a long one or the interview is scheduled to take over an hour. It also gives you the opportunity to do one more check on your hair, make-up, tie, etc.
- **Be mindful.** If told to take a seat in a waiting area, remember you are a guest and there will be people walking by and observing you. If there is company literature around it would be to your advantage to read it. You might learn more about the company and seeing you read connotes interest to the person who comes to get you.
- **Water only.** If you are offered coffee or tea, thank the person, but it's wise to decline. There are too many things that can go wrong with these kinds of beverages. Just ask the woman who had to go around for three different interviews in the same company with a big coffee stain on her beautiful white blouse. Best to stick with water, if it's offered.
- **Make small talk.** On the walk to the area where you will be interviewing, be prepared to engage in small talk. Some examples: “The weather is really

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

quite nice." "I really like this time of the year." "The directions were perfect."
"I made it here in great time." "This is really a beautiful building, how old is it?"

- **Be confident.** Smile and show confidence. It won't get you the job, but it could turn out to be the reason you don't.
- **Give a firm (confident) but not overpowering handshake.** But wait for it and when the person extends their hand to you.
- **Wait to be shown where to sit.**
- **Watch your body language.** You are being evaluated as soon as you walk into the room. If you start off on the right foot it tends to carry through the interview. However, if you start off on the wrong foot, it's awfully difficult to fully recover. Don't slouch, rock back and forth, or tap your toes to name a few no-no's.

As the interview concludes, make sure you:

- Thank the interviewer for the opportunity to interview for the position.
- Get business cards from each person you've met.
- Make sure you find out what the next steps are. How are you supposed to follow-up? Is it by phone call, email, or some other method? What timeframe should you expect? Will you hear from them in a few days or weeks? Be sure you understand what happens next.

When you get home, make sure you:

- **Reflect.** Jot down your thoughts about the interview, as part of your record-keeping system, focusing on strong points and areas you want to improve on.
- **Call your references.** If you were asked to give the names of professional references, notify them that they may be receiving a call from the organization you interviewed at. Inform them what was discussed in the interview and what issues they can address to best help you.
- **Send a thank you within 24 hours.** Send one to each person you interviewed with. Try to personalize the thank you by mentioning something that was said or occurred during the interview.

Although email with its immediate delivery is typically the preferred choice among employers, it does have two downsides. First, it is intrinsically less formal than a business letter sent by regular mail. Second, it is more probable your recipient will trash your email than your business letter.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

As you make the decision of how to send your thank you, bear in mind there is no right or wrong answer. Some people choose to do an abbreviated version of the letter via email with the more complete version sent as a typed and mailed letter. Others email and snail mail the same letter. Decide what you think will work best for you.

Some career coaches swear by the handwritten note since it is more personal. However, others say to avoid handwritten letters unless you have already established a more social relationship with the interviewer. Your goal is to appear professional throughout the interview process. When in doubt, err on the side of conservatism.

Just never underestimate the value of a thank you!

Life is a mirror and it will reflect back to the thinker what he thinks into it.
Ernest Holmes

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.
Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.
Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.
Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.
Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.
The slogan "press on" has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.
Calvin Coolidge

"Those who bring sunshine to others, cannot keep it from themselves,"
said Peter Pan.
Sir James Barrie

Deliver me, O Lord.
From the desire of being loved.
From the desire of being extolled.
From the desire of being honored.
From the desire of being praised.
From the desire of being preferred.
From the desire of being consulted.
From the desire of being approved.
From the desire of being popular.

From the fear of being humiliated.
From the fear of being despised.
From the fear of suffering rebukes.
From the fear of being calumniated.
From the fear of being forgotten.
From the fear of being wronged.
From the fear of being ridiculed.
From the fear of being suspected.
Mother Teresa

Decision-Making Phase

Making a Wise Decision

Getting a job offer comes with an emotional mix of euphoria, relief, and pressure to make the right decision. For some, it's the job they want and the right answer is obvious. For others, it's less simple.

There are all sorts of questions to consider when acting on a job offer:

- **Does the job meet your career objective?** You and your family must determine what the answer to this question.
- **Does this job fit into your short term and long-term goals?** Or does it fit into one but not the other? If so, are you at peace with this trade off?
- **Is the pay in your desired range?** Is the job's salary in line with what you want? Will you be able to sustain your desired quality of life?
- **Should you negotiate for something that is not part of the job offer?**
- **Could some of the work be done at home?**
- **What do you think of the organization?** Is this the kind of job and organization you would feel good about coming to five days a week for eight hours a day?
- **What sacrifices will you have to make?** Are you willing to do extensive travel, work extra hours, accept a cut in pay)? What are your limits?
- **Will you be happy?** Think in terms of months and years from now.
- **What do your family and trusted friends think?** While accepting or declining the job is ultimately your decision, those close to you may have some valuable insights to offer.

Making a good decision requires time and thought. Once you're offered a position, it's wise to ask for a day or two to think it over and discuss with your family, friends, or even a volunteer from Joseph's People. Asking for extra time is especially helpful if you are considering negotiating any parts of the offer. You may think of questions you forgot to ask in your excitement. You can also take one more look at the organization online and through your contacts, checking to ensure the stability, culture, and success of the organization.

An example of a good request for more time might be:

"Thank you very much for the offer. It sounds very exciting and I am really very interested in joining your team. You can imagine that this is a major decision for me and if you don't mind I would like to discuss it first with my family. I would like to get back to you on Tuesday with my decision if that is OK with you".

A simple way of sorting out your thoughts is to make a list of pros and cons about the job offer. Visualizing your feelings in writing can help you see the right decision.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

As you make your decision, bear these pearls of wisdom in mind:

- This is your livelihood and you have right to proceed with it as you see fit. Be respectful yet confident. Don't be afraid to ask for what you need for fear of losing the offer or seeming ungrateful.
- This isn't a one-way deal. As much as you are receiving from this offer, you will also be adding value to your new employer's organization.

Hopefully, you receive an offer that fulfills or exceeds all your needs. Realistically, however, you may need to compromise. To secure the right long-term offer, you may need to take a temporary pay cut or accept what might be perceived as a lesser job title. Taking a step backwards in hopes of taking two steps forward in the future is sometimes the prudent choice if it will help you advance your career goals or better balance your work and home life. You may also decide to accept a temporary job to make ends meet while you keep searching for a more ideal position. There's no right or wrong answer. It's a question of what you feel is the best decision for you.

When it comes to a job offer you need to consider the full package being offered that can include but is not limited to:

- Salary
- Health benefits
- Other benefits such as retirement plans
- Vacation & personal time
- Hours and flexibility of your schedule
- Ability to work remotely
- Office environment
- Stock options
- Bonuses
- Sign on bonus
- Car.

Ultimately, when it comes to a job offer, you can do one of two things:

- You can accept or decline the offer.
- You can negotiate details before deciding if it's a yes or a no.

If you are leaning towards accepting the offer, it is wise to ask for the offer in writing before formally accepting. By receiving the offer in writing, you ensure that what you heard offered verbally is in fact what is being offered. And it becomes harder to alter the terms once you have already accepted.

Negotiating

If you are hesitant whether to accept or decline, your other option is to negotiate. There is a certain amount of risk, involved so never negotiate without a formal job offer and only if you are confident and comfortable in your decision.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Good negotiating should be a win-win proposition where neither party feels as though they have lost. You may have to give something up to get something in return (e.g., getting two weeks off for a vacation planned long before you accepted the job, without pay).

While deciding whether to negotiate:

- **Make sure you know exactly what is being offered.** If not, get clarification.
- **Reflect on your objectives and values.** Confirm whether the offer satisfies them before trying to get something extra.
- **Evaluate your feelings.** Decide whether you feel comfortable asking for something more than was offered. A certain discomfort is natural. However, if this discomfort is creating a lot of stress, you may want to simply accept the offer, be content, and recognize that the toughest part of your Journey has been completed.

If you decide to negotiate, here are some tips to follow.

- **Be clear.** Clarify with the company so that you clearly understand their offer.
- **Be honest with yourself.** Make sure you can confidently articulate your value which justifies your request(s).
- **Do your research.** If you are asking for a salary increase, know what a fair and reasonable salary would be given your qualifications, the value you could add to the organization, the type and level of work you would be doing, the industry you would be working in, and the company's geographic location.
- **Be focused.** Negotiate one thing at a time and be judicious in your selection. For example, if deciding between negotiating salary or benefits, begin with salary. Although your benefits will not change much over the course of time, your initial salary will affect any subsequent raises, bonuses, etc.
- **Be positive.** Express your enthusiasm and appreciation for the job offer before introducing your request. Frame your request around your research and the value you bring to the company.

For example, you might begin: "Thank you for the offer. It sounds like a great opportunity at a great organization. However, given my research and the value I believe I can offer the organization, the salary appears to be on the conservative side."

At any point in negotiations, you may receive one of three responses. The company may approve your proposal, decline it, or come back with a counter-offer that is a compromise between your request and their original offer. Once you decide to negotiate, you need to know what your minimum acceptable offer is, how much you will push to get until you settle, and at what point you will walk away from the job offer.

Successful negotiation requires confidence, conviction, strong communication skills, and a degree of risk-taking. If you feel uncomfortable asking for anything, you are free to accept or decline the job offer as originally presented. Whatever your decision, just remember, this is your Journey and, with the help of friends and family, and faith, you will make the right decision.

Beginning Anew

The End of the Journey?

You will receive a job offer and be back to work, but this does not mean your Journey is over. In fact, rather than considering it an end, it is healthier and wiser to look at it as a new beginning—an exciting time of discovery about yourself and the world around you. Challenging times like being unemployed and searching for work teach us that change is everywhere. Accepting change enables us to move forward so that we can enjoy life, our families and friends, and our faith. It teaches us to take little for granted. Consider how, on your Journey, you have built a wonderful network of family, friends, and colleagues, some of whom you met for the first time. Take a moment of gratitude to reflect on your Journey.

Exercise 28: What have I learned?

What is the single most positive thing you feel you have learned from this experience?

How will this influence your future career?

How will this influence your future life?

Every experience in life changes us. How has this experience changed you?

As you move forward, remember these three things:

Say thank you. Thank those who helped you reach your goal on your Journey. Send a hand-written note, letter, email, or make a call to those individuals who were there for you, thanking them for their support. You will also want to keep them as part of your network and keep in touch with them in the future. Perhaps you may call upon them in the future or, just as important, perhaps you can be there for them the next time as they travel on their Journey.

Joseph's People, Ltd
Support Groups for Unemployed & Underemployed Workers

Make a fresh start and have hope. Look at your new job as an opportunity to learn new things, meet new people, and begin a new Journey in your life. Whatever you do, recognize that nothing lasts forever and, if you are ever unemployed again, take solace that you have proven yourself successful in achieving your goals and can conquer any new challenges in the same way.

Give back. Think about what you can do for others who are in the place you were in. We at Josephs People are always looking for people who have successfully traversed this Journey to tell their stories and share their insight into what made their job search a success. As others have done for you, you too can help inspire people to achieve success on their own Journeys. If you would like to give something back and help others, feel free to contact a volunteer at Joseph's People.

Your Journey has not ended....it has just begun!

We are nothing as a people if we do not fashion our dreams into realities, and we do not require miracles to do it.

We require an understanding of the way things are, the way things work and the way things can be.

When you first take responsibility that is the first day of your life.

When you take a disadvantage and you find a way to make use of it, or to work around it, or to upend it and banish it as a factor in your life, that is the first step you have taken that counts.

A first step does not in any sense guarantee success.

It merely guarantees the possibility of a second step.

Villanova University and you graduates have taken responsibility for a small but crucial contribution in that direction. To take responsibility.

For this, I applaud you,. And I offer you one word of advice on this most auspicious and joyful of occasions:

Commence! And it can't be said too often....

May the force be with you.

***James Earl Jones
August 1996 Commencement Address –
Villanova University***