

# Media Article



Vocational Guidance Services

## IT'S LONELY OUT THERE – HOW TO COPE WITH A LONG JOB-HUNT

As the formal economy has shrunk over the last few years, so the time candidates are 'on the market' between jobs has expanded. How should candidates manage that time?

Know your enemy: Understand how employers view job seekers. Know what appeals to, and repels them. For a start, most employers see recruitment as an onerous chore to be pushed to the bottom of their 'to do' list. They call the shots on when to get round to filling the management gaps. They would prefer to recruit someone whose work they know (for example, a temporary secretary they've been happy with in the past rather than a stranger) or go on the advice of an agency that trust. As a job seeker, it is somehow up to you to remain in the hiring 'game' but all the employer wants to do is eliminate as many candidates as possible. They want to meet candidates who have done their background work on their organisations who have perfected their CVs and interview manners. No effort; no hope of a job. They don't want to/or don't have time to come seeking for you – the onus is on you to make yourself known to them. Unfair? Brutal? That's life. If you show a lack of initiative or persistence you won't even make it off the starting line. No one owes you a job. So how on earth are you meant to keep your spirits up?

Keep busy. Try out at least three job-hunting methods. If you see one isn't working (e.g. sending out random CVs) drop it. Take the approach that job-hunting is now your full time job. Work the same hour on your search and you would if in a job, and in that way substantially cut down the number of months you are 'on the market'. Do your research on and make calls to up to 40 managers a day. Your aim should be to secure face to face meeting with 4 new managers a day. You prepare to convince them that you are different from the hundreds of other job hunters. Take rejection with a pinch of salt and don't forget to ask if they know of other managers who may be hiring. Remember to rehearse what you are going to say both on the phone and face to face. Don't forget to smile even when you are on the phone you can hear it in your tone or voice. They must not remember you as sad unemployed person but as enthusiastic future employee. Thank every one for their time if you have met them face to face send a thank you note reiterating what makes you a strong candidate.

Bottom line: don't sit at home getting depressed – take a part time IT or language course or volunteer. As you'll need to keep paying the bills, don't shun the chance to do some basic temporary work but don't let it become permanent, always keep job seeking time aside. How many famous actors were after all once waiters.

### **Pull on support**

Your network of friends and family will be there for you now knowing you would do the same for them. Go and talk to the successful job hunters in your network to learn how they got into their present positions. Ask some employed friends (not your parents!) to monitor your progress and hold weekly meetings with them to feedback on what you have done. Choose someone who will keep pushing you to try harder and someone who will also show sympathy when needed they can be your career bosses.

It is worth reiterating here that the more effort and thought you put into a job hunt is directly proportionate to the chances of success. Keep a positive and ambitious attitude to this challenge and that is how you will be remembered by those that matter.

**Madeleine Dunford**  
**Managing Director**  
**Career Connections**

