

stress LESS

PREPARE AND PRIORITIZE

When you lose a job, your ability to cope depends on how quickly you prepare for the economic and psychological difficulties ahead. A job loss can make you feel like you've lost control of your life. It's best to expect and prepare for the most likely challenges — such as stress and money.

Be At Your Best

Having the right qualifications for a job is extremely important. But actually winning the job may depend on whether you have self-confidence and a positive outlook.

Obviously, job seekers confident about themselves and what they can do are better able to market themselves to potential employers. When you're unemployed, you should use the hours in your day to your best advantage. Moving from a structured day to one that is completely self-directed requires assessment, discipline, and strategic planning. Consider doing volunteer work as an effective way to exercise skills or obtain additional/transferable skills. Volunteer work may also help you to avoid dwelling on stressful matters while you increase networking opportunities.

Make sure your time is productive — take charge of your time and create structure in your life and job search. One of the first steps in managing your time is to plan your day and week. You should commit 30–40 hours per week to your job search.

Turn your job search into a full-time job. Set firm goals and plan your day down to the hour. Create a schedule, including lunch and breaks, just as you would on a job.

Adjust and Adapt Economically

Most job seekers agree that concerns over how to pay the bills and make ends meet cause great stress during periods of unemployment. Even normally calm people find it difficult to think clearly about finances during this time. Before you do anything, assess your financial situation.

Take a realistic look at your family's income and overall expenses and prepare an interim budget. Setting priorities and following a budget can relieve some of the strain during a job search. It will help you get back on your feet financially and become current on your bills, once you are receiving a regular paycheck. Be willing to accept a job with lesser pay and/or a part-time position temporarily while continuing to search for the job you truly want.

If you have saved for a rainy day, you may have an emergency fund that will support three to six months of household expenses. You may still wish to cutback on extra expenses, such as dining out and entertainment.

UPSHOT: No Personal Woes Must Show

By the time you're heading for a job interview, you must be at your professional best — leave no trace of personal stress or economic hardship when meeting an employer for the first time.

Workforce Solutions is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Texas Relay Numbers: 1-800-735-2989 (TDD) 1-800-735-2988 (voice) or 711