

# 10 Tips for Surviving a Long Search

[Free Articles](#), [Inspirational](#), [Job Search Basics](#)

By: Kate Wendleton

This is a tough market and many people are having long searches. People who conscientiously work the Five O’Clock Club methodology—and who truly do put in 35 hours a week on job-search—still arrive at the stage of receiving offers within two to three months. But longer searches are not uncommon. As things drag on, people feel their morale and energies slip away. How do you rebound? The Energizer Bunny has to be your role model, and it is especially important to maintain a positive attitude to have a successful campaign with a happy ending.

Here are Ten Tips to help keep you motivated when things look bleak:

1. Do something new. People who have been unemployed a year might tell you they’ve been “looking for a year.” But chances are, there are “new things to do.” For example, try professional-level volunteer work, join associations, earn some money some way. One relatively senior-level person took a job at the Gap just to get out of the house. He was excited about the great sales he made, and it kept him pumped up and feeling like a winner. We encourage job hunters to do what they have to do to keep body and soul together. Review the Five O’Clock Club methodology.
2. Expand your targets! Think outside of the box. If you have been looking only in your major metropolitan area, look in the suburbs. Most of the job growth in the 80s and 90s occurred there. People who have worked for accounting firms should look on the client side: explore accounting for not-for-profits or small- to mid-sized corporations. There may be literally hundreds of companies and organizations to explore, most of which can be unearthed by just a few hours of Internet research—which brings us to the next tip.
3. Use many techniques for getting meetings. Most job hunters rely on search firms and ads. Yet fewer than 20% of all jobs are filled through search firms and ads. The most overlooked technique is direct contact (which is not the same thing as networking). Our job hunters are getting 36% of their meetings by contacting companies directly. Follow their lead: find out the names of department heads. Try to get in to see people whether or not they have openings. “You never know when you’ll need someone like me” is one approach.
4. Be flexible on salary. Most people are not making what they made three years ago. Many people were over-paid during the boom of the 1990s. People should expect to be paid fairly at current market rates, and the market is not very strong right now.
5. If you’re forced into a low-paying position, remember that this is all temporary. Whatever kind of work you might settle for, whatever you get paid—think of it as temporary until the market turns around. Don’t beat up on yourself, “Oh, this is what my life has come to after all these years.” Instead, do what you have to do to

- bring in some money and keep yourself healthy emotionally. The situation will all change again in a few years. You're just trying to get through this rough patch.
6. Be around POSITIVE people. It doesn't help to associate with people who wallow in depression and take perverse comfort in telling themselves about "how bad it is out there." Join associations to make positive contacts and meet people with an upbeat attitude—and to keep up-to-date in your field. Five O'Clock Clubbers work at keeping a positive attitude, measure the effectiveness of their searches, and keep on plugging. Of course, they also have a career coach to help them see that the glass might just be half full and guide them through the process.
  7. Continue to job-hunt even if your heart isn't in it. When you were in your old job, there were days you didn't feel like doing it, but you did it anyway because it was your responsibility. Job-hunting is your job right now. Some days you don't feel like doing it, but you must. Make a phone call. Write a proposal. Research a company. Do your best every day. No matter how you feel. And somehow it will get done, as any job gets done.
  8. Get a job-search buddy. Your buddy is someone who is also searching whom you can talk to — fairly often and informally. "Here's what I'm planning to do today in my search. What are you planning to do? Let's talk tomorrow and make sure we've done it." You can probably find your job-search buddy in your small group at the Club. To avoid giving each other bad advice, be sure to follow the Five O'Clock Club methodology. That is, read and reread the books—and your weekly group will help keep you on track.
  9. Take care of yourself physically and mentally. Job search is stressful, and stress can prompt you to give up good habits and throw in the towel, for example, stop going to the gym, abandon your diet. So take care of yourself physically. Watch your drinking, eating, and smoking—they can get out of hand. Get dressed every morning. Look good. Get some exercise. Eat healthful foods. Take some time off to recharge. Don't postpone having fun until you get a job. Schedule at least three hours of fun a week. Do something you are normally unable to do when you're working, for example, go to a museum or to the ballpark. You'll be more relaxed and more interesting when you go on interviews!
  10. Remember: you are distracted, so pay attention to protect yourself. We've heard it from job hunters for years: they get mugged, walk into walls, lose wallets and purses—because their minds are elsewhere. Job search—especially a long drawn-out job search—is not an ordinary situation, and extraordinary things can happen. Be on your guard.

***Have you skipped any steps? Something you overlooked might be the something new to try—and be honest with yourself: Are you really spending 35 hours a week on job search?***