

# Summer Job-Search Strategies

By Deborah Walker, CCMC

It's easy to lose career focus during the summer months. Kids home from school, warm sunny weather and household projects tend to distract job seekers. Additionally, the interview process often gets disrupted while employers accommodate multiple vacation schedules. These interruptions become an easy excuse to put a job search on hold until September. Don't give in to the temptation to take the summer off. Your summer sabbatical will add months to your job search. Increased competition in September means a smaller margin of error in interview performance. Keep your job-search momentum throughout the summer to avoid frustration in the fall.

Here are three tips to keep your job search moving forward.

## 1. Stay on track.

Keep a schedule of weekly job-search activities that include networking for leads. Summer is a great time for increased social activities, which can quite naturally lead to discussions about your search. Additionally, tap into your on line social network to find people who know people within your targeted companies who may be able to introduce you to hiring managers. Don't overlook the potential help of others in uncovering job leads.

Don't let your project "to-do" list take precedence over your job search activities. Yes, summer is a great time to build a deck, paint a kitchen or landscape your yard, but don't allow your projects to keep you from moving forward toward a new job. Take care of your job-search goals first, then use all those extra daylight hours to fix up your nest.

## 2. Don't get impatient.

It's easy to let job-search activities slide when interviews get delayed, rescheduled or canceled. It's best to accept that hiring stalls are a natural summer phenomenon. Use your extra time to research targeted companies in greater depth. The insider information you pick up may give you the extra "leg up" in the interview to win out your competition. Remember, even though the hiring process seems slower during summer, companies still interview and make offers June through August.

## 3. Keep your interview skills sharp.

The normal tendency in summer is to neglect critical interviewing skills. The idea is "once interviews start back up I'll pull out that book and get ready." Bad idea. Don't get caught off guard. Start perfecting your interview skills BEFORE your next interview is scheduled. Minimally you should be able to:

- \* State your strengths and weaknesses
- \* Give reasons for short job durations
- \* Sell your transferable skills
- \* Give examples of your accomplishments

Remember, these are just the minimum issues you should be able to handle in an interview. Every job seeker has their own list of questions they hope they don't get asked. You must identify the questions that make you squirm and be ready with great answers.

Following these tips will help you maintain your job search momentum during the busy Summer months. Remember, work on your job search, then work on your tan. Build your interview skills then build the deck. You'll be way ahead of the September crowd and months ahead in landing your next job.

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Deborah Walker, CCMC is a career coach helping job seekers compete in the toughest job markets. Her clients gain top performing skills in resume writing, interview preparation and salary negotiation. Learn more about Deborah Walker, Career Coach at: <http://www.AlphaAdvantage.com>.