

## Time Management

Being unemployed does horrible things to most peoples internal clocks. It is often astonishing to newly unemployed people how quickly they get used to sleeping in, how easy it is to not follow a routine, and how quickly Dr. Phil and Oprah become your best friends.

For most of our lives we are given schedules to live by. When we are kids we go to school. When we are adults we go to work. These are the things we schedule everything else around. Take away that chunk of pre-organized time and most of us have a great deal of difficulty enforcing a schedule for ourselves.

How do you spend your day? It is simple question but how many of us could account for all the things we did in a given day. Try this little exercise. Journalize what you do tomorrow. Each hour, on the hour, write a short note about what you accomplished in the previous sixty minutes. Do it all day and be brutally honest. Start from when you would normally get up if you were going to work and finish when you would have normally got home from work. Review the list than night and ask yourself how well you spent the day. Don't do this exercise and beat yourself up when you find out that you spent 3 hours watching TV, 2 hours surfing the internet, 1 cleaning the house (again), 1 hour flipping through magazines not related to a job search and lunch started with the 10:30 snack and ended with the 1:00pm snooze.

The problem is that most of us don't know how to time manage our job search efforts because we were never taught. Learning to manage our job search and time begins with an understanding of how we currently spend the time we have. Accounting for what you currently do often helps people realize that they are not spending their day as productively as they could.

Try this to help you stay on track with your job search and time management. Do up a work schedule. Post it at your desk or where ever you do the bulk of your job search work. Start it off with 8:00am by being in your office ready for work. Perhaps from 8 to 9 you check a predetermined list of job search sites for new postings, read the classified section in the news paper for any positions of interest. Don't respond to them now, just clip them or print them for later in the day. From 9 to 10 perhaps schedule for returning phone calls, making non-cold calls, follow up with interviews, conducting phone informational interviews that you set up earlier. From 10 to 12 make it your goal to have a face to face meeting scheduled with some one external every day. It could be networking contact, and informational interview, a seminar or workshop. From 1 to 2 spend doing research taking a very proactive, entrepreneurial approach to your job search. From 2 to 3 prepare and send out marketing letters to places you have done research on earlier. Form 3 to 4 prepare and send out resumes, cover letters and thank you notes. From 4 to 5 try some cold calling. Catching people and the end of the day or first thing is usually easiest.

That is just a sample. Fill in what works for you and vary your schedule a little from day to day so it does not become boring. But make a schedule, post it and stick to it.

Article by: Greg Laughton

greg@jobsearchtools.net