



MAKING CENTS

HOW TO RE-ENTER THE JOB MARKET

-John P. Napolitano, CFP®, CPA, PFS, MST, RLP®



As if losing a spouse to death or divorce isn't heartache enough, chances are that most survivors or suddenly singles who have been out of the workforce for many years will find themselves in need of a return to the 9-to-5 grind. The prospect of re-entering the job market can seem overwhelming, particularly when you're still recovering from a spouse's death or the breakup of a marriage. But with the help of a few basic strategies, finding employment can be crossed off your "to do" list.

Money may be tight, but it will be well worth it to have a professional work on your resume. And if your resume turns out to be on the light side, experience-wise, turn cover letters into an opportunity to emphasize your skills, highlight accomplishments and allow your personality to come through. If you are returning to the job market after a fairly lengthy absence, a cover letter is the place to briefly explain your present situation and need to return to the work force. But don't use a cover letter as a personal journal - keep explanations short and to the point and above all, indicate in a concise manner why your skills are suited for the position.

It's highly likely you know someone who can help you get an interview. Talk to former colleagues, family and friends - anyone who can be on the lookout for opportunities for you. In fact, take this opportunity to get letters of recommendation from previous employers or influential contacts.

Don't overlook temporary agencies. Aside from the revenue boost, temping gives you an inside look at industries or occupations that you may not have considered. Also, it is common for temp jobs to turn into permanent ones.

If a lack of technology know-how is holding you back, look into local continuing education courses. Check out regional publications for seminars you can attend. There are a large number of online programs that can either refresh your technological prowess or introduce you to new computer-related skills.

You can also acquire computer competence or other training doing work as a volunteer. Sure, ultimately you want to get a paycheck for your efforts, but volunteering your time in a field or organization of interest could be a worthwhile endeavor.

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