

# Enlist Friends in Your Job Search

*By Keith Ferrazzi, Monster Contributing Writer*

If you're laid off, resist the urge to curl up in a corner and lick your wounds or to sit at your computer doing nothing but sifting through online ads and articles all day.

Instead, reach out! The need to let others help, which is the central message of my book **"Who's Got Your Back"**, is the single most overlooked insight when it comes to conventional wisdom about job searching.

Think of it this way: Just as you had colleagues at your office, you now need colleagues for your new position, **"Managing Director of Job Acquisition"**.

In particular, you need a certain subset of colleagues who are mutually committed to your success and who will stand by your side to make sure you don't fail. These are what I call lifeline relationships in **"Who's Got Your Back"**.

While you may not already have a roster of lifelines in your professional life and by the way, there's no better time to get started, chances are you already have friends or associates who can be of service. Here are a few suggestions for tapping them to help you get that next gig.

## 1. Ask for Candor

Have friends scrutinize every aspect of the package you present to potential employers, from your cover letter and resume to the outfits you wear to interviews.

Even the most self-aware among us need the broader perspective that comes with candid feedback. Many friends aren't used to being asked for total honesty, so make sure they understand that's what you want. If they care about you, they'll help. Let them know you think their candor could make the difference.

## 2. Build Your Work Plan Together

Staying motivated and proactive in your job search isn't easy, particularly if you relied on bosses and colleagues to provide structure to your work in the past. You may feel like you've been thrown into the void. Friends can help.

Sit down with someone you respect and who has "high executive functioning", which is the ability to break down projects into detailed work plans. Have that person help you build a daily schedule that includes research, networking, cold calls and follow-up calls.

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### **3. Ask Friends for Accountability**

Once you've got your plan, set up daily or weekly email check-ins with a friend who will hold you accountable to sticking to it. Find a partner who wants you to do the same for him.

He may not be looking for a job, but we all have goals that could be served by an accountability buddy. If the need for accountability is mutual, your buddy's investment in the process will be stronger.

### **4. Create Your Own Friendly PR Firm**

Studies have shown that close friends aren't usually the ones who find you a new job. It's the friends of your friends who reach a broad enough circle to overlap with your employment needs.

So ask friends to become your own personal PR machine, spreading the word about your talents to their larger circle wherever it's appropriate, such as on social networking sites, among colleagues, at their church picnic or in their book club.

### **5. Use Your Unique Currency, Time**

That's one thing you've got that no one else does, so use it wisely. Obviously, concentrate on your job-specific outreach, but also use it to build broader relationships. Constantly seek opportunities to use your free time and talent to help people you know and people you don't know. And don't ruin your efforts by keeping score. Doing so is deeply inauthentic and turns stomachs like cheap cologne.

### **6. The Fun Factor**

Don't get so goal oriented during your job search that you forget to let loose and have a good time. Retreating into isolation will leave you unhappy and unproductive, so ask your friends to keep your dance card full.

Find ways to make your job search social, that is, "Party With Purpose", but also find and create activities completely outside your professional goals. Bottom line: Your life is happening right now, not the day you're assigned a company computer. Don't forget to live it.

Not all of your friends will be up to the task of making a deep commitment to helping you out, but some of them certainly will be, and asking is the only way you'll find out. In doing so, you'll have taken a giant first step toward creating those lifeline relationships of an inner circle of deep, trusting friends and colleagues who will do everything imaginable to help you succeed.

*Keith Ferrazzi is the author of the No. 1 best seller "Who's Got Your Back"*