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5 Threats to Your Job-Hunting Stamina

by Heather Boerner, for Yahoo! HotJobs

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Marathon runners know that the key to crossing the finish line first isn't brute strength but stamina. The same goes for the job hunt.

"A [job search](#) is always a mind game," says independent career counselor Cathy Severson of Santa Barbara, California. "You don't know if this is going to be a sprint or a marathon. Assume it will be a marathon, and you'll be pleasantly surprised if it's a sprint."

But it's easy to lose stamina -- and motivation -- especially in this economy. Watch for these stamina killers and their solutions:

Stamina-Killer #1: Ignoring Feelings

Been laid off? "You may feel confused, ashamed, even depressed," says Anne Perschel, president of Germane Consulting and an organizational psychologist who coaches executives and helps employees change careers. It's natural. But letting it fester will destroy your momentum.

"Job loss is probably one of the top three stressors in life," she says. "It affects your identity and your sense of value. When you have days where you feel down, make small steps toward your goal."

Stamina-Killer #2: Job or Bust

If the goal is just to land the job, you're setting yourself up to fail every day you don't get a job offer, says Severson.

"You never know when an offer is going to appear," she says. "When the focus shifts to the actual tasks, the job searcher feels a greater sense of control and is better able to handle the long haul."

Try these switches:

- Instead of "I will get a job in X field this year," try "I will send out five [resumes](#) this week."
- Instead of "I will have three job interviews this month," try "I will call five people for informational interviews today."

Stamina-Killer #3: Applying for Every Job

It's tempting to up your odds of an [interview](#) by applying for any job for which you're remotely qualified. Avoid that trap, says Perschel.

"[Job interviewers] will know you're not a good fit for the job" if you apply for anything, she says. "You'll get more rejections, fewer responses, and more negative feedback." Your momentum will wane.

Stamina-Killer #4: Negative People and Information

"How do you feel after you talk to each person in your life -- drained or energized?" asks Severson.

Apply that question across the board and you'll know what -- and who -- is sapping your energy so you can avoid them. Talk about your job hunt with only the most energizing friends, family members and colleagues, and seek out positive acquaintances.

The same goes for news: If you're paralyzed after reading or watching the news, avoid it. You can always go back to it when you feel stronger.

Stamina-Killer #5: Pursuing Work You Don't Love

If you're going after the same old work, it'll be harder to keep trying every day. Banish mediocrity and seek out the work you're passionate about.

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Not only will it keep you going, says Perschel, but also it has a surprise bonus: It increases your chance of landing that dream job.

"Assume there are other people out there who have the same skills," says Perschel. "But that energy, commitment, and passion? It can be your real differentiator."

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