

JOB HUNT, stay sane (really)

One rejection letter away from losing it? Here's how to keep going when your inner force is flagging*

We're not going to sugar-coat job hunting. When successful, it's the best bloody feeling in the world. If it's not (and we've all been there), it's brutal. Here, chartered psychologist Denise Taylor, author of *How To Get A Job In A Recession*, explains how to attack the lows – and bring on the highs.

Approach it like an actor

Actors – even brilliant, famous ones – get rejected. Jennifer Lawrence was turned down for the lead in *Twilight*. Amanda Seyfried and Blake Lively were rumoured to have lost out on the role of Daisy in *The Great Gatsby* to Carey Mulligan. Scarlett Johansson had three auditions for *Ler Mit*, then got pipped by Anne Hathaway. The lesson? Actors treat rejection as part of the job: they're just not right for that specific role. It's true for us, too, so don't feel embarrassed or defeated. Treat an interview

STAY SOCIAL

In a job hunt, you and your laptop are going to get close. But when you actually start talking to it because you haven't seen another human in *seven days*... get social! Take your laptop to a café or library a few times a week and you'll likely see the same faces – we all know most people get jobs through people they know. Caring

like an audition and review your performance. Did you talk enough or too much? Where did you struggle? Then use this info to ace the next one.

Find your sweet spot

Many people say to treat a job search like a full-time job, but that's unrealistic. I tell clients to devote 20

hours a week to it (ten hours if you're still working). The key is to identify your productivity peak – that magic time when you feel totally 'on it'. A tip: if you're still in employment (albeit a job you loathe), search before work, not after it when you're drained.

Make it a game

OK, it's not going to be the most fun ever, but – like the way you push yourself harder each time you exercise – set yourself goals (and rewards). Eg. "I'll make five calls and send five emails, then I'll have a Facebook break." Tot up how many calls/emails/speculative letters you notched up last week, then try to go one better. Admit it: you're on a roll.



Smiling your boyfriend to bring you a GAT totally acceptable

THINK OUTSIDE THE HUNT

Being out of work means a lot of free time. Ever mused about a slow day at the office? It's infinitely worse if you have no office at all. So focus on what else you'd like to do. Improve your digital skills? Learn French? Now's the time. Visit do-it.org.uk for voluntary jobs, Google or some TED Talks or take an online uni course via coursera.org (the 300 courses include science, business and law). Busy = better.

GET CONNECTED When joining LinkedIn groups, always send a personalised request to connect. You can't do this from a mobile device, so use a computer or risk being unintentionally rebuffed.