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PUBLISHED BY:
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GRAPHIC DESIGNERS:
Renee **BLUE**, Jonathan **TUBBS**, Chris **AYER**

EDITORIAL:
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HOW TO

ACE Job Interviews when switching careers

Millions of people change careers every year. Whereas professionals may have once worked for the same company for the majority, if not the entirety, of their careers, nowadays it's not uncommon for men and women to change jobs several times before reaching retirement.

Changing jobs and changing careers are not necessarily the same thing. Professionals mulling a career change will have to consider a host of factors that men and women looking to change jobs may never have to contemplate. Such factors may include returning to school and lifestyle changes designed to make living on less income more feasible.

Professionals changing careers may also need to develop a strategy for handling job interviews. When changing jobs as opposed to careers, professionals can draw attention to their resumes, essentially letting their experience speak for itself. But while experience is often a feather in a job candidate's cap, professionals changing careers may need to focus more on their futures than their pasts when interviewing for a new career.

DRAW ATTENTION TO THOSE SKILLS THAT WILL APPLY TO YOUR NEW CAREER.

All of your experience and skills likely won't transfer to your new career, but that does not mean you're going in with an empty briefcase. Make a list of your most transferable skills, and develop an interview strategy that highlights those skills and explains how they can be applied in both the near future and over the course of your new career.

REMAIN POSITIVE THROUGHOUT THE INTERVIEW.

Even if you are changing careers because you're unhappy and/or unfulfilled in your present line of work, avoid badmouthing that industry and your past employers. Doing so will only reflect negatively on you and raise a red flag with prospective employers. Instead, explain your reasons for pursuing a new career path in terms that excite potential employers about your candidate.

The decision to change careers can induce both excitement and anxiety. Maintaining a positive attitude and employing various strategies when interviewing with prospective employers can help make the transition to a new career go smoothly.

SHOWCASE HOW YOU HAVE ADAPTED IN THE PAST.

Much of the business world moves at a breakneck pace. That pace has become even faster thanks to advancements in technology that routinely affect how businesses operate. Even if you have never before changed careers, that does not mean you have not adapted to change. Make a list of the changes your employers have instituted throughout your career, highlighting how you adapted to those changes and benefited from them in their aftermath.

USE YOUR CONTACTS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE.

Even if much of your experience won't transfer to your new career, your professional network might still be valuable to a prospective employer. The longer you have been working the larger your professional network likely is, so highlight those contacts in your interview and illustrate how you can put them to good use should you be hired.

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Take a cue from successful women

Women had another successful year in 2015. According to the Fortune 500 list, 2015 tied the record set for the highest number of female CEOs in America's largest companies by revenue. Twenty-four women, including Mary Barra of General Motors, Meg Whitman of Hewlett-Packard and Ginny Rometty of IBM, made the list.

Although women make up 45 percent of the labor force and only 5 percent head Fortune 500 companies, women are making greater strides than ever before. For example, in 1998, just one woman led a Fortune 500 company, according to Pew Research Center.

Certain traits could help propel successful women to the top. Here's a look at some of the ways female professionals can overcome professional hurdles and make their mark.

BE PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO.

Women who maintain passion about their careers are more likely to overcome any challenges and stand out in the workplace. If your profession is not stoking any passion, explore alternate career opportunities.

RECOGNIZE YOUR STRENGTHS.

Today's professionals are less likely than their predecessors to stick with one company or line of work for their entire working lives. But just because you change jobs or career paths does not mean your past experience is useless. Successful women know what they do best, whether it's public speaking, writing or making sales pitches. Apply those strengths when looking for a new job or career.

KNOW WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP.

Even the most accomplished women have limitations. Asking for help when you need it can help you overcome those limitations. To be good at what you do, you first have to learn from others. Sometimes the smartest way to overcome an obstacle is having several hands on deck to provide a boost. Thinking that the work is better left to you alone could be a mistake. Enlist help when you need it and never hesitate to ask for another perspective.



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MAKE TIME FOR EXERCISE.

A sluggish body can make for a sluggish mind. Successful people need to be sharp, and exercise can help them maintain their mental focus. According to John J. Ratey, Ph.D., a clinical associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, muscles send hormones rushing to the brain where they mix with a substance called brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF. BDNF plays a role in brain cell growth and learning. Without it, brains can't absorb new information or grow and learn. Exercise also helps relieve stress, which can make resolutions easier to see and make tasks less overwhelming.

GO EASY ON YOURSELF.

While many successful people strive for perfection, achieving perfection is unlikely, if not impossible. Successful people often admit to being their own worst critics, but don't beat yourself up if you endure some trial and error. Mistakes can be a great teacher, so use any you make to your advantage.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE RISKS.

Successful women are not afraid to take risks. Many may have decided they don't fit a specific mold and want to affect change. However, calculated risks are different from reckless decisions, and it is important to recognize the difference. A calculated risk may involve starting your own business after learning the ropes in a specific field and testing the waters. Reckless behavior would be opening that business with no relevant experience.



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Graduation is an exciting time in the lives of students. After years in the classroom preparing for life after school, graduation marks a time when students are finally ready to enter the 'real world' and land their first professional job.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics advises that earning a college degree can greatly improve a person's chance of landing a job. The more education a person receives, the lower his or her prospects of being unemployed become. The BLS said that, as of 2014, individu-

als with a bachelor's degree could earn on average \$1,101 per week, compared to \$668 for persons with high school diplomas. Those with bachelor's degrees had a 3.5 percent unemployment rate compared to 6 percent for those with only high school diplomas.

The National Center for Education Statistics estimates that roughly two million students earn bachelor's degrees each year. Many others will go on to earn master's or doctorates before entering the workforce.

As the economy continues to improve, job prospects follow suit. According to a job outlook from the National Association of Colleges and Employers, employers had plans to hire 8.3 percent more new college graduates in 2015 than in 2014. The growth of businesses and the rising rate of retiring Baby Boomers has spurred employment prospects.

Landing a job post-graduation requires diligence on the part of new grads, and the following are a handful of ways to make those pursuits more successful.

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 Hit the ground running. It's tempting for recent grads to take the summer off and have a lax approach to job hunting after all of the hard work they put into their education. But recent grads can get a head start on their competition by beginning their searches immediately after earning their degrees. Create a list of a few target companies you have your eye on, and then tap into your network to find a contact at each company and reach out to that contact directly.

 Focus on a career path. Prospective employers prefer that applicants have some certainty regarding the types of jobs they are looking for. Take a career assessment test or work with a career counselor to narrow down the fields and positions that speak to you. Avoid the 'I'm willing to do or learn anything' approach to job applications. Employers may see that as desperation.

 Don't rely entirely on the Internet. Oftentimes, landing a good job requires reaching out to people in person. In a MonsterCollege survey, 78 percent of job-seekers said networking was a factor in their job searches. Standing out from the crowd may involve physically standing out. Attend conferences or speeches from people who work at the companies

you're investigating. Don't be afraid to shake some hands and introduce yourself to others.

 Think about what you can offer to prospective employers. Narrow down your specific skills and customize your resumes or cover letters to the specific talents you can offer each potential employer. Use examples that illustrate these skills from past school courses, volunteerism or part-time jobs. Your 'quirks,' like being the most punctual person in your group of friends, may turn out to be the skill an employer admires the most. Consider developing a career portfolio that highlights your past achievements.

 Do your homework before an interview or networking opportunity. Always be prepared before an interview or when meeting with someone you are soliciting for job help. Research the company and know its background so you have an idea of how the company runs. Keep a list of questions at the ready. A knowledge of the company can help you stand out from other applicants.

The next step for many after graduation is to find a job that fits with graduates' career goals.

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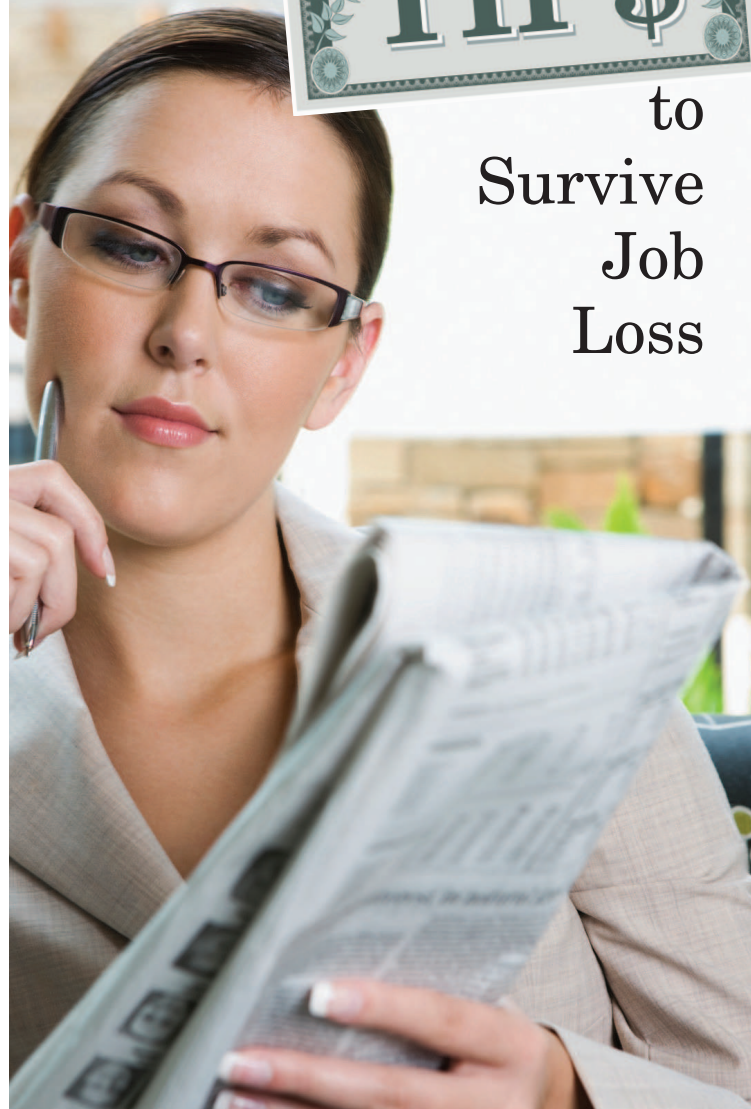
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FINANCIAL TIPS

to Survive Job Loss



The job market is fickle, and no one is immune to layoffs. Although the unemployment rate in the United States dipped to 4.9 percent in June 2016 and Canada's rate hovered around 7 percent in May 2016, the job market remains somewhat unpredictable. Preparing financially for unemployment can be prudent, even for working professionals who do not anticipate being laid off.

Financial advisors recommend adults save the equivalent of six months' salary to cover their expenses in the event of job loss. Individuals who want to protect themselves and their assets in the case of job loss can also heed the following tips.

\$ **Examine current finances.**

It's important to have an accurate assessment of your current financial situation. Calculate monthly expenses to get a handle on what you are spending. Compare those expenditures against your savings to see if the latter can keep you afloat should you lose your job. Look for areas where you may be overspending, even cutting out some luxuries if you suspect a job loss is looming or just want to build your savings.

\$ **Begin budgeting for loss of health insurance.**

Health insurance coverage typically ends when a person is laid off. Loss of coverage might not be immediate, but it may occur within months of a layoff. Health insurance is a considerable cost, and you will need to budget for the expense so that you will have access to the health services you need.

\$ **Research options in government benefits.**

Few people like the prospect of visiting the unemployment office after being laid off, but

delaying the process could negatively affect your finances. It can take some time for unemployment claims to be processed, so apply as soon as possible after losing your job.

\$ **Find ways to supplement your income.**

Bringing in any money can be helpful. If it is feasible, look for ways to make some cash while you search for a new job in your field. This may include working from home, freelancing or selling items online. Consider part-time work while you look for a job. You may prefer to find temporary or part-time work in your field, but your hobbies and other interests may present income possibilities as well.

\$ **Practice living with less.**

Cut out unnecessary expenses and attempt to live with less. You may find that this comes easily and continue to do so even though you remain employed. Such a trial run can bolster your savings in the event of layoff while also acclimating you to living with less should a layoff ever occur.

\$ **Don't burn bridges.**

While it's understandable to harbor some resentment toward an employer for letting you go, that same employer may be able to help you in the long run. Supervisors can help you find a new job or write glowing recommendations. Staying positive and resisting the temptation to badmouth a former employer can only help you in the long run.

Losing a job is seldom easy and is often unexpected. But there are steps adults can take to prepare for losing their jobs.

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How To Connect With A Recruiter

Finding a job when the economy is struggling is not easy. An overcrowded pool of applicants coupled with fewer jobs can make a job seeker feel like a proverbial needle in a haystack.

When men and women apply for a position, the first person to see their resumes is typically a human resources employee, a company's in-house recruiter or even a recruiting service hired by a company to help it fill the position. This person is responsible for sifting through the many applicants and narrowing those down to a manageable number of people whom the recruiter will then interview, or recommend for an interview. (Be it over the phone or in the company's office.)

That said, grabbing the attention of a recruiter could make or break a person's chance of landing a job. The following are a few ways individuals can help themselves gain the attention of a recruiter and increase their chances of being called for an interview.

Recognize the importance of an effective C.V. A curriculum vitae, or C.V., is incredibly important. The C.V. is an overview of your experience and any additional qualifications. Longer and more extensive than a resume, the C.V. is the first thing many prospective employers will examine. It should include a detailed summary of your background and experience, including professional associations and licenses, awards and any other information relevant to the position to which you're applying. Include your name and contact information as well as any specific skills you have that make you a strong candidate for the position. Organize the C.V. by dates and don't be afraid to go into too much detail, especially if those details are relevant to the job for which you're applying.

Tailor your C.V. to each specific position. Avoid using a generic or non-spe-

cific C.V. This won't make you stick out among the competition and the recruiter is likely to pass you over for consideration. Tailor the C.V. to each position for which you're applying, clearly illustrating how your past experience makes you a strong candidate for the position.

Always be prepared. If the recruiter deems you worthy of an interview, that interview could come at any time. A phone call from the recruiter could be a screening interview, so once you apply for a position, be prepared to interview at any time. Research the prospective employer and anticipate some of the questions he or she might ask you when responding to your application. Practice answering these questions so you can make a strong first impression.

Recognize the other ways you can make an impression. A strong C.V. and an effective resume can make a great first impression, but today's recruiters will also utilize social networking to determine your worthiness as a candidate. Applicants can help or hurt their chances with recruiters depending on how they approach social networking. Speaking ill of past employers via social networking sites is a significant red flag, as is posting comments or photos pertaining to any questionable behavior. Avoid using expletives on social networking sites as well.

But social networking can be used to make a solid first impression. Use sites to grab recruiters' attention in positive ways, such as referencing work done in the community or your involvement with professional organizations. This can complement a C.V. and resume and increase your chances of landing an interview.



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ADAPTABILITY



Important In The Workplace

**“Don’t
equate
flexibility
with
being a
pushover.”**

Employee turnover, downsizing, an economy in flux, and many other factors contribute to the ever-changing face of business. While men and women might once have hoped to grow old with a company, today’s workers are more inclined to switch jobs several times before they retire.

Companies routinely evolve to serve their customers, a learning process that will include some trial and error. Companies should be willing to try new strategies as they adapt to ever-changing markets. Workers who are flexible and able to adapt to adjustments in the workplace are among the most desirable employees.

What defines adaptability varies depending on the profession, but taking the time to learn how to accommodate

the needs of bosses and other workers can be a great way for men and women to ensure their long-term success.

- **Recognize the likelihood of change.** Professional environments are fluid, and employees who resist change may find their employers deem them expendable. Employees must recognize that change is part of the business world and must go with the flow to maintain their good standing with employers.
- **Look for benefits.** A willingness to be flexible can benefit employees just as much as it benefits employers. Employees may find that a flexible schedule or the ability to telecommute presents

new opportunities that can make life easier.

- **Keep lines of communication open.** Many men and women like working for companies that are willing to try new things. Keep lines of communication with supervisors open to ensure your ideas are heard, and encourage subordinates to offer their ideas at every turn.
- **Don’t equate flexibility with being a pushover.** Flexibility should not go so far that an employee feels taken advantage of. As companies change, the process is best if it involves give and take on the part of employees and their employers.

UPDATE YOUR *SKILLS* in a Secure Job Industry



The last several years have seen a series of economic ups and downs. Managing careers amid such instability has been challenging for many individuals, but professionals looking for more security can take steps to find careers that promise more long-term stability.

Focusing a job search on industries that have shown strong growth and the ability to ride out waves of economic turmoil can tip the odds in your favor. Certain industries have better long-term employment outlooks than others, and men and women looking for more stability should consider these industries when pondering their next career moves.

ACCOUNTING

Thanks to ever-changing financial policies and greater scrutiny placed on lending practices and bookkeeping, accounting jobs remain solid career choices. Jobs in accounting can range from entry-level to more advanced (and more lucrative) positions requiring certification or a secondary education.

MEDICINE

Financial health does not safeguard people against illness, and health

services are needed regardless of the state of the economy. That makes medical careers some of the most coveted and stable around. Healthcare professions can be lucrative, and careers in medicine are not restricted to doctors or nurses. Clinicians, medical imaging personnel and medical laboratory technicians also are needed. The United States Department of Labor lists services for the elderly and persons with disabilities, home healthcare services and other health practitioner positions among the fastest-growing career opportunities.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Computer systems analysts and programming experts are highly coveted in today's digital world. Many company operations are completely overseen by relatively autonomous computer systems. As technology keeps changing, employees who are able to stay abreast of the changes will only grow more valuable.

BUILDERS

With more money injected into the economy, homes and businesses can once again resume growth. Laborers

with skills in construction, masonry and residential building, and structure contractors can count on steady employment.

ENVIRONMENT

Clean-energy and other environmental jobs may currently make up a small percentage of employment, but reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate jobs in this sector are growing much faster than other fields, including healthcare. Workers ready to get in on the ground level may benefit from opportunities for advancement and the stability of working in a field that fig-

ures to grow considerably over the next several decades. Green jobs include work that is primarily involved in the production of green goods and services, such as renewable energy, pollution reduction and recycling. Green jobs also are those that involve education and training related to environmental compliance.

Entering the job market for the first time or reentering it with a new career direction can be intimidating. Focusing education and skills on careers that are proven winners can be the security and confidence boost professionals need.









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Job hunting tips for men and women over 50

Though the job market has improved in recent years, many men and women are still out of work. Perhaps most troubling, many of those people are age 55 and older who are fearful of an uncertain future and a job market where they are seemingly overlooked. According to a 2012 study from the Government Accountability Office, the number of long-term unemployed people age 55 and older has more than doubled since the onset of the recession.

For many unemployed men and women over the age of 50, the harsh reality of a job market that does not value their experience or skill set is deeply disconcerting. But as difficult as the job market can be for older men and women, it's not impossible to find a job, though it might take some ingenuity and perseverance.

- **Don't limit yourself.**

Those who were victimized by layoffs should expand their job searches to more than just their previous fields. While it's definitely a good idea to maintain contacts in your old field and routinely look for openings in that field, it's also a good idea to examine your skill set and experience and find a new field where these things apply. Chances are your years of experience are transferable to many fields, and redirecting your job hunting efforts to a new line of work might yield opportunities you are not even aware existed.

- **Embrace the 21st century.**

Many companies or organizations mistakenly assume that the digital age has passed older workers by. Workers in their 50s might be unfairly categorized as dinosaurs with no grasp of mobile technology or the latest software programs. But those applicants who can demonstrate their proficiency in the latest technologies, including mobile technologies like smartphones, tablets and social media, can put themselves above fellow applicants.

- **Start working.**

If you are mired in long-term unemployment and spend every day at home, get out and start working. Volunteering is a great way to lift your spirits, network with other professionals and maybe even learn of employment opportunities you won't hear about on the couch at home. And volunteering, be it with a charity or a professional organization, is a great way to revive your resume and continue to add accomplishments despite your unemployment.





- **Emphasize your age.**

Many unemployed men and women over 50 tend to look at their age as a hindrance that is preventing them from finding gainful employment. But your age can be an advantage, as many organizations find older applicants are more reliable and need less time to adapt than younger applicants with less experience. When emphasizing your age as a positive, don't focus on job titles, which many other unemployed men and women your age likely highlight on their resumes. Instead, focus on specific achievements and accomplishments and reduce the emphasis you place on job tasks. Achievements tend to stand out above titles, and men and women over 50 likely have achieved more than younger, less experienced applicants.

- **Think small.**

Smaller companies wherein employees tend to wear many hats are more likely to value experience than a larger company. By the age of 50, many professionals have vast experience in a host of different positions, and that versatility is likely to appeal to a small company looking for employees who can multitask.

Finding a job after the age of 50 isn't easy. But taking a broad approach and emphasizing as opposed to downplaying your experience might help you stand out among a crowded pool of applicants.

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Make Sure Your Resume Doesn't **COST YOU A JOB**

Many a night's sleep has been lost worrying about an upcoming job interview. Questions like "Will I make a good impression?" or "Am I qualified for the job?" can make for a restless night's sleep on the eve before a job interview.

Writing a resume is another aspect of the job hunt that can stoke your nerves. Men and women may pour over job timelines and skill summaries for hours in an effort to ensure they have included the right mix of information to get noticed.

Though resume writing has changed considerably over the years, some conventional wisdom about resumes still prevails, and how closely potential applicants adhere to these rules goes a long way toward determining if they earn a chance at an interview.

Though resume writing has changed considerably over the years, some conventional wisdom about resumes still prevails, and how closely potential applicants adhere to these rules goes a long way toward determining if they earn a chance at an interview.

NO ME, MYSELF AND I: While the resume should showcase your professional accomplishments, it also should showcase how your skills relate to the job you're applying for. This way the company understands you have researched the position and are in tune with what they're looking for in an applicant.

NO ONE DOCUMENT FOR ALL RESPONSES: A resume is not a static document. It needs to change depending on the job you're applying to. Although there will be certain information that can remain the same, update the skills and other information based on each position.

NO ONE PAGE IS BEST: Applicants were long told to keep their resumes concise, limiting the document to just one page. However, if your experience is extensive or one page cannot contain a long job history, don't be afraid to submit a two-page resume.

NO FAILING TO BE SELECTIVE: You need not include your entire job history on a resume, especially if certain past positions you have held are completely irrelevant to the position for which you are applying. Don't be afraid of job gaps, either. Many of today's recruiters understand that the changing economy can make it challenging to maintain steady employment.

NO OVEREMBELLISHMENT: Do not embellish your skills. Always be open and honest on your resume. You may be asked to prove you can perform certain tasks, and if you cannot back up what is included on a resume, you will have wasted your time and the time the interviewer spent discussing his company's opening with you.

NO IMPERFECTIONS: A resume is a reflection of you, so one with typographical errors or a poor layout is never acceptable. Ensure your resume is as professional and error-free as possible. Have a friend or a proofreader look it over before distributing.

NO PAID POSITIONS: Internships or volunteer work are perfectly acceptable to include on a resume, particularly for younger applicants who may not have a wealth of professional experience. Include a mix of information on the resume that will reflect your versatility.



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