

You've been laid off, furloughed, downsized, right-sized or terminated. It doesn't matter what the word is as it all feels the same...devastating. Even those furloughed are not guaranteed to walk back into the door of their employer.

So what do you do? Sure, you can watch The Matrix for the 15th time or you can take action. Here is your lightbulb moment for the day - you can indeed take steps right now to help your career

Here are some tips for you.

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HOW TO MOVE YOUR CAREER FORWARD AFTER A LAYOFF

HORTON CONSULTING, LLC



DISCOVER YOUR AHA
by horton consulting, llc

Tell yourself that PROGRESS is more important than perfection during this time.

Taking simple, straightforward steps now can help you move your career forward:

Stay Engaged

Keep in touch with your personal network. So many folks are working from home or possibly not working. It is a great time to rekindle old connections. Zoom and Google Hangouts can be your ally in connecting with people. Reach out to friends, former co-workers and others to stay engaged with your network. Share your current situation and ask about theirs. Ask for suggestions and help. If you're not comfortable asking for help, just share your situation and your work desires. Set a goal to talk to two people within your personal network each week. It is estimated by multiple resources that around 70% of jobs are gained through networking. So go on, call a friend for a coffee over Zoom.

Build Your Network

Yes, you can still meet someone new right now. Ask your personal network who you should be talking to: anyone who has the type of role you are looking for, someone who works in your industry or the industry you want to work in, someone in your idea company. There are so many options here on who to reach out to. Invite them to have a coffee over Zoom. Keep the conversation to 25 minutes to be respectful of their time. Be prepared with questions. To get you started here are a few.

- What was your career path to your current role?
- What is the biggest challenge for someone interested in this field, industry, etc.?
- What do they enjoy most about their job? Company? Industry?

If there is something specifically you need help with, tell them. Is it resume review, introductions or simply input into the job search process.

Don't forget to thank them. A thank you email is a must and a handwritten thank you even better. (Note, they may not be working in the office right now due to COVID-19).

And finally, ask how you can help them. Very few people offer assistance. This along with thank you notes will make you stand out!

Join a Professional Network Group

If you haven't already done this, do it now. Find a local professional networking group and join. There are many options – industry groups, job related (e.g. Project Management Institute, Tech after Five) or even job search/support groups. There is a great Upstate South Carolina group called Next Move GSP that can be found via LinkedIn. They focus on building personal networks so when it does come time to find a job you have a network to support you. There are similar groups in most cities.

Up Your Skills

Many websites offer free or very low-cost online training right now. LinkedIn Learning is a great place to start. You can choose from leadership, project management, emotional intelligence as well as hard skills like Excel and Adobe. Podcasts are another great place to learn. Now is the time to learn something new or build on what you already know. Set a goal to do one a week.

Refine Your LinkedIn Profile

- Update your profile picture and ensure it is professional. Cell phones take perfectly good pictures so find a nice backdrop, wear something professional and smile. Have a family member take the pic rather than a selfie.
- Update your list of skills. This is how you get found. Be mindful not to add skills that aren't in your field of interest. Depending on the skill it can be confusing to a recruiter as to what you are looking to do.
- Update work experience and ensure it matches your resume at least at a high level.
- Ensure you align your job with your company so that the company logo is visible. If you have a grayed out company logo next to your work experience then you have either not connected to your company or your company doesn't have an established LinkedIn page...and most companies have a page!
- Add in Community involvement. This gives a recruiter and hiring manager a little bit more rounded picture of you.
- Ask for recommendations and write recommendations for others. These get noticed.
- And definitely build your network of connections! Connect with friends, former co-workers, people in your industry, etc. A larger network increases your chance to be seen.

Be thoughtful about your next steps during this time. Quantity isn't necessarily the best approach when moving your career forward or applying for new jobs. Quality is the better tactic.

Remember, progress not perfection!

You've got this!