

Tips to help jobless Americans persevere

The numbers are staggering: The Labor Department reported 598,000 job losses in January 2009, the worst one-month decline in 35 years, with the overall unemployment rate now at a whopping 7.6 percent, the highest since 1992. To date, almost 5 million jobs have been lost during this recession.

"Add to that millions more who, out of desperation, are working part instead of full time or have fallen off the unemployment payroll completely, and the full extent of the crisis hits home," notes BusinessSuccessCoach.net CEO John M. McKee, among America's leading career coaches and author of "Career Wisdom - 101 Proven Ways to Ensure Workplace Success."

McKee offers seven tips to help the unemployed persevere through — and even make the most of — this difficult time:

1. Consider going solo. Given the amount of dramatic changes affecting organizations and businesses across all sectors, it may be extremely difficult and perhaps impossible to replace your job when it's lost. Now is the time to think outside of the box. This

might be the turning point opportunity you need to follow a dormant dream to open a business.

2. Understand the outsourcing threat. If you do choose the corporate route, determine whether or not a change of specialty will better satisfy both personally and professionally. However, now more than ever jobs that were rarely if ever contracted or outsourced have gone that route. If your particular job skills could be done by others via a computer, even overseas, it's time to rethink your career plan.

3. Do a self-SWOT analysis. For decades, SWOT analysis has been a basic, straightforward model providing strategic direction to organizations worldwide. By assessing a business entity's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, SWOT analysis serves to maximize a business' chance for success.

4. Update your skill set. With unemployment now at record highs, there is far more demand for jobs than supply. Not staying on par with others vying for the same job(s) will be a death knell. Take seminars, coursework or

leverage other skill enhancement vehicles to get on the leading edge and, thus, maximize your personal value with prospective employers.

5. Create a personal action plan. Even in difficult times, there are many who thrive despite economic downturns, business closures, and other tumultuous events solely because they have defined goals and strategies. One way to achieve this is with a personal action plan, which takes into account the three different facets of life: the professional self, who earns a living; the personal self, who does things for sheer satisfaction; and the financial self, who understands and manages money for both the short and long term.

6. Network online. Now more than ever those in a hiring position are looking to social media to qualify suitable candidates and weed out those who may simply look good on paper.

7. Stay busy. Going from full speed in a full time job to complete stop at home can be demoralizing and counterproductive.

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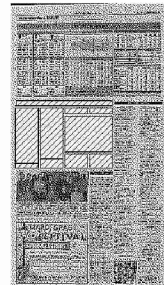
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