

Maintain the Leverage of Being Employed Without Having a Job

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Any employment expert will tell you that it is a lot easier to obtain a good job offer when you are already employed somewhere else. Due to layoffs and terminations, people sometimes don't have that luxury. Don't panic! Here are some solid ways that you can take back the leverage you need to successfully obtain a competitive job offer:

1. **Have the Right Attitude** - Being "unemployed" simply means you now have a new job, Career Improvement Professional. For 8 or more hours a day, all your energy should be poured into bettering your career by finding the right opportunity. Not only will you make strong progress in finding a new job, but the activity itself will promote a feeling of accomplishment, and provide a boost to your overall self-confidence, a much needed trait throughout this process. Languishing around your home and submitting resumes on the Internet between commercials is a surefire way to increase your feelings of desperation and uselessness, severely impeding your path to career success.
2. **Contract work through an agency** - Some companies specialize in assigning professionals to contract (temporary) positions. Corporations have projects that need to be completed but they sometimes aren't ready to hire someone permanently to their staff. This makes contract work an appealing and practical alternative. I have worked with professionals who begrudgingly started working on contract positions and now they wouldn't have it any other way. The rate of pay is higher and the work-life balance tends to be more reasonable.
3. **Start your own business** - In the state of Ohio, you can register a new corporation for \$125. Having your own business allows you to employ yourself and, in-turn, show it as current employment on a resume. If your name is Bill Johnson, avoid calling it Johnson's Engineering Consulting. If it is initially obvious to an employer the company is yours, the desired effect of showing consistent employment is lost. You can explain it to them in the interview when you are asked. The goal here is to get your foot in the door.
4. **Suck it up** - You might have to accept a position that isn't exactly what you had in mind; however, it serves the purpose of getting you back to work. That doesn't mean a CFO should take a job as a filing clerk. There is a point when a position's skill requirement is too far below your typical responsibilities can diminish future earning potential. The CFO should consider a position as an Accounting Manager or Director of Finance. While the money might not be as good, it is better than \$0 and allows you to leverage yourself to bigger and better offers at a fair competitive salary, ideally within that company.
5. **Good work references** will increase an employer's desire to hire you. Make sure the references are telling potential employers they would rehire you or, if your termination was the result of a layoff, to have them explain that they would have kept you if it was economically feasible. This demonstrates that you are a wanted candidate and it will elicit a strong offer of employment.
6. **If you were fired for cause** - First, be sure to understand your previous employer's policy on references. Make sure the company is only permitted to provide dates of employment and that your contact listed is someone in Human Resources. You always want to be up front and honest as to why you are out of work, but definitely want to avoid using a reference from a company with loose policies, ready to throw you under the bus without thinking twice. If this is the case, attempt to contact customers or suppliers you worked with who can vouch for their positive experience working with you as long as it doesn't violate any previously signed employee agreements.