

From rejection to redirection – Applying for jobs and building resilience

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Building resilience in the job search



Looking for a job can feel overwhelming. From searching for opportunities to navigating interviews and waiting for responses, the process can be emotionally demanding. However, developing resilience can make this journey more manageable and purposeful.

My personal experience applying for jobs has shown me that not every application leads to an interview, or even a reply. This is a normal part of the process. Employers often receive hundreds of applications for a single role, making rejection inevitable. Understanding this early helps shift expectations and builds the mindset needed to persevere.

This blog will share practical tips to help you stay motivated, confident, and focused throughout your journey to finding the right job for you.

Understanding the process

It is incredibly important to consider and prepare emotionally and mentally for the job search, as the application process can take a long time. Job searching is rarely quick or straightforward. It often involves multiple applications, rejections, and periods of uncertainty. [In the UK, there are, on average, around 48.7 applications per job,](#) highlighting how competitive the market can be.

External pressures from family, peers, or social media can create unrealistic expectations for securing a job immediately. In reality, job searches can take several months or longer. Recognising this helps reduce unnecessary pressure and allows you to approach the process more strategically.

Building resilience



Resilience is commonly defined as the ability to recover from setbacks. In the context of job searching, it means learning from rejection rather than being discouraged by it.

Each rejection offers an opportunity to reflect and improve. Whether it is refining your CV, improving interview techniques, or targeting more suitable roles, setbacks can provide valuable insights. Reframing rejection as redirection allows you to move forward with purpose rather than frustration.

Starting small

Breaking the job search into manageable steps can make the process less overwhelming. Setting small, achievable goals, such as updating your CV, applying for a set number of roles each week, or improving your LinkedIn profile, can create a sense of progress.

Tailoring each application is equally important. Researching the company, aligning your skills with the role, and demonstrating genuine interest can significantly improve your chances of success. Consistency, rather than intensity, is key to maintaining momentum.

Seeking Feedback



Feedback is essential for improvement. Career advisers can help refine your CV, cover letters, and interview performance, offering insights that strengthen your applications.

At [the University of Westminster](#), students can access one-to-one careers support, workshops, and resources designed to enhance employability. Seeking guidance early can help you identify gaps and build a stronger application strategy.

Lastly, don't be afraid to reach out to the employers who have rejected your application to enquire about what improvements could be made in your application to become a successful candidate.

Build a Support Network



Job searching can feel isolating, which is why building a support network is essential. Joining career societies, networking workshops and events, connecting with [mentors through Zone29](#) and LinkedIn, or building relationships with lecturers and other alumni can both feel like having a community to fall back on when you need emotional support/guidance, and it can also provide you with more information about the job market and certain positions available.

Prioritise your wellbeing

Maintaining your well-being during the job search is crucial. Establishing healthy routines, such as regular sleep, exercise, and time for relaxation, can help sustain your energy and focus. Creative activities, social interactions, and breaks from job searching can reduce stress and prevent burnout. A balanced approach ensures that you remain productive without becoming overwhelmed. The [University of Westminster offers support and resources to enhance student wellbeing](#).

Track Your Progress

Organisation is key when applying for multiple roles. Keeping a record of applications, whether through a spreadsheet or journal, helps you stay informed and prepared. Tracking your progress allows you to:



- Avoid duplicate applications
- Prepare for unexpected recruiter calls
- Reflect on what works and what can be improved

This structured approach not only increases efficiency but also provides a sense of control over the process.

Conclusion

In conclusion, job searching can be challenging; however, a positive attitude and a well-organised plan can make a large difference in your approach. Building resilience, starting your job search journey with small steps, and taking care of your well-being can help you avoid feeling overwhelmed by the process.

By seeking feedback, leveraging available support, and staying organised, you can turn setbacks into opportunities for growth. Keeping track of your applications can help you stay organised, prevent duplicate applications, and retain information about the roles you applied for. Ultimately, rejection is not the end of the journey; it is part of the process that guides you towards the right opportunity.

Would you agree with this information? What tips would you give on the journey of job searching from your personal experience?