



Helping Your Job Search by Volunteering

Being out of work can be very difficult, not only for financial reasons, but also because not having a set schedule, or a place to go each day can take it's emotional toll. However, there is an option that many people overlook when they are out of a job; an option that can help in one's **job search**, all the while helping others in need: volunteering.

Volunteer!

You don't have to necessarily make volunteering while you're between jobs a full-time endeavor (you do still need enough time to devote to your job search), but giving 20+ hours a week can help your **job search** in more ways than one.

Filling in the Employment Gaps

The hope is that a good job is just right around the corner for you. But the honest truth is that the more time that passes while you're in between jobs, the bigger gap in your employment history grows, and this is something that isn't attractive to potential employers. If it comes down to your resume with employment gaps on it, and a resume of someone else who's employment is more consistent, the employer will most likely choose the other candidate. Volunteering is a wonderful way to avoid these gaps!

Keep Your Skills Sharp (and Maybe Learn Others!)

It's hard to keep your job skills sharp when you're not constantly using them, and volunteering is a great way to use the work skills you have. Volunteering doesn't have to just be serving food at a shelter (which is great). There are many opportunities available at agencies and organizations across the country to apply your talents. For example, if you're a public relations specialist, contact a non-for-profit agency and offer to help them with publicity for their next fundraiser. If you have work experience in computers, get in touch with a local organization and offer to assist them with their computer needs. Nearly any non-profit organization needs help with their legal needs, their accounting; if you have experience working in an office, offer to answer phones for an agency, etc. Be creative, there are so many **volunteering opportunities** that will not only help you to keep the skills you have, to also learn new ones that can help you in a future (paid) job.

Networking



By getting out in the community, and interacting with others, you're able to network, which is HUGE in job searching. You're also building up your references. What non-profit agency coordinator wouldn't give a great recommendation for someone who is working hard pro bono, and giving their time to help others?

What Goes Around...

The bottom line is that whether or not you believe in Karma, if you spend time giving to others, sooner or later something good will come your way. This may or may not be in the form of your dream job, but it can't hurt!