

Using Holidays Productively



Just because potential employers are having a break does not mean that there are not things that you can do to prepare for when 'normal' activity resumes. We have divided them into the 5Rs.

1. Review and Reflect

Consider your job seeking activities over recent months:

- What worked well, what didn't – are there patterns that indicate where you do better?
- How did you use your time – did you spend enough time networking?
- Look back at your career plan, your job seeking plans – are they realistic?
- Re-read your CV and job applications – how do they strike you now?

2. Revise

Based on your analysis:

- Update your career plan – are there better alternatives to a full-time job working for someone else?
- Update your plan of action – your time balance, using your network better
- Update your target list – does it properly match your values, aspirations, skills
- Keep your job-seeking database up to date – re-evaluate the status of each entry

3. Refine

Improve your marketing collateral:

- Your CV – make sure any 'gap' includes productive activities, such as retraining, volunteering, freelance work, 'projects' (including home improvements)
- Your calling scripts – go through them with colleagues for different scenarios
- Your email and letter templates
- Your LinkedIn profile – and also revisit former colleagues to make them 'contacts'
- Any supporting evidence of your skills and achievements, e.g. a 'portfolio'
- Your "Tell Me About Yourself"
- Your responses to those 'awkward' interview questions

4. Research

Now is a good time to get up to date on your research:

- Market trends – especially emerging opportunities (e.g. in 'green' technologies)
- Trade press – what's happening in your market sector
- Company profiling – which are the fast growing smaller companies (tomorrow's giants)
- Individuals – the movers and shakers, primary contacts at your target companies
- Location – drive (even better walk!) around those business parks; identify the newcomers
- Job adverts – not just for jobs, but indicators of companies hiring and industry needs

5. Refresh and Relax

It is important to keep body and mind healthy, so:

- Keep fit – take regular breaks, walk, exercise
- Take breaks – every hour or so; intense computer work
- Socialise – the holiday period is a good time to network and make new contacts that could lead to that opportunity that is just right for you – including those hidden jobs.

Enjoy your holiday!!

The Lighter Side

On the first day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
An update to my CV

On the second day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Two sales pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

On the third day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

On the fourth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Four calling scripts, three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes,
and an update to my CV

On the fifth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Five golden 'hooks', four calling scripts, three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and
an update to my CV

On the sixth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Six plans a-laying, five golden hooks, four calling scripts, three levels of contact, two sales
pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

On the seventh day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Seven links for viewing, six plans a-laying, five golden hooks, four calling scripts, three levels
of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

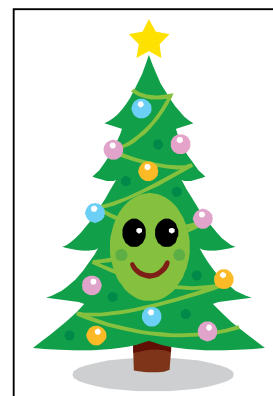
On the eighth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Eight hours for training, seven links for viewing, six plans a-laying, five golden hooks, four
calling scripts, three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

On the ninth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Nine awkward questions, eight hours for training, seven links for viewing, six plans a-laying,
five golden hooks, four calling scripts , three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and
an update to my CV

On the tenth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Ten tempting targets, nine awkward questions, eight hours for training, seven links for
viewing, six plans a-laying, five golden hooks, four calling scripts , three levels of contact, two
sales pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

On the eleventh day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Eleven network contacts, ten tempting targets, nine awkward questions, eight hours for
training, seven links for viewing, six plans a-laying, five golden hooks, four calling scripts,
three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and an update to my CV

On the twelfth day of Christmas my advisor gave to me
Twelve days relaxing, eleven network contacts, ten tempting targets, nine awkward
questions, eight hours for training, seven links for viewing, six plans a-laying, five golden
hooks, four calling scripts, three levels of contact, two sales pitch minutes, and an update to
my CV.



Merry Christmas – and best wishes for 2010.