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Searching for a job

Problem- and emotion-focused coping

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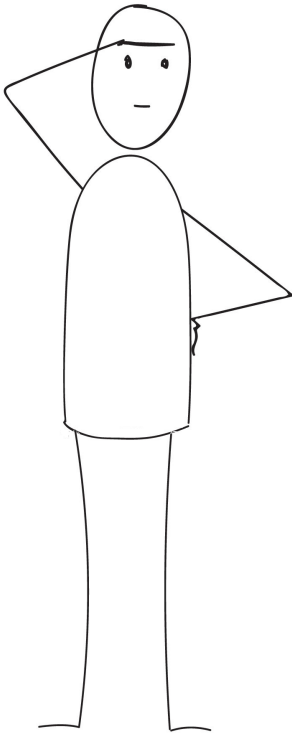
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Prologue



PROLOGUE

Thank you for opening my dissertation on job search. Maybe you have an academic interest or a personal interest in job search that caused you to open it. Most likely you have or will have some experience with job search yourself. As do I. Allow me to share one of my job search experiences with you:

All my wishes for a future career seemed to come together in this one perfect vacancy. It was send to me by several colleagues and friends separately. The timing could not have been better because after all the chapters of my dissertation were finished I wanted to start a new chapter elsewhere. I was excited. I spent days writing and re-writing my motivation letter aided by constructive feedback of more than one dedicated helper. It proved tougher than I imagined to convince the selection committee of something that was so obvious to me: I was the person for the job. Finally on the evening before the deadline I went to bed tired and relieved after having submitted my documents. The next day I received a confirmation email and the waiting began. A week went by without hearing anything. They must have had many applicants I thought to myself, they would probably come back to me next Friday. I got more and more nervous as the days past and I started to check my email compulsively. On Friday still nothing. In the weekend I ruminated, uncertain about what had happened. They sure must have received my application, because I received a confirmation. I imagined three stacks of applicant files: the definitely not stack, the worth consideration stack, and the invite for interview stack. Had I already been placed on a stack? On Monday I suppressed my fear of coming across inpatient and asked if anyone could tell me more about the procedure. After some confusion, it became clear what had happened. To my dismay, due to a technical dysfunction at the HR-department, my application had not been placed on any of my imagined stacks. The application procedure was well on its way without me in it!

This story fits seamlessly among the many stories I have collected in the past years. These stories show that seeking for a job

can be tough, despairing even and that dealing with setbacks during job search can be hard. To me it seems as much unavoidable as ironic that I would get my share of negative job search experiences, because I have spent the last four years doing research about how job seekers can deal with negative job search experiences and how they can search for a job effectively. I unintentionally prepared myself extensively for finding a job after finishing my dissertation about job search. In the last four years I read about job search, spoke to job seekers and job search professionals, and tested ideas about how to improve the process of finding a job. This allowed me to write this dissertation in which I generated evidence-based advice for job seekers that can help them to cope with negative job search experiences and to spend their time more effectively for finding a job. As a job seeker, I have already benefitted from my research and I hope it will help others too.