



Overcome Career Roadblocks

At different points in our lives, we often face situations or circumstances that make it difficult to move forward in our career development. This document presents four possible “career roadblocks” and tips for how to overcome them, according to recently successful job seekers:

Roadblock: Feeling Stuck/Unmotivated

Tip: Make a plan to keep positive and develop momentum

- Stay involved with others; meet regularly with friends to prevent isolation.
- Create and commit to job search goals – find a partner to help you stay on-task.
- Stay healthy – eat well, exercise, participate in activities that increase your well-being, talk to a counselor, if needed, and make sure you’re sleeping!
- Plan to have fun! There are many low-cost or free activities you can do. To start, check out [this article](#).

Roadblock: Lack of Practical Experience / Out-of-Date Skills

Tip: Build your subject knowledge and hands-on experience

- Take continuing ed classes, e-seminars. Current USF students have access to [Lynda.com](#), a site that hosts hundreds of online tutorials and learning paths.
- Attend conferences, professional association events on relevant topics. If you’re not sure what professional organizations are available, start with [CareerOneStop](#).
- Volunteer your services (i.e. “practice”) for friends, nonprofits, professional associations, your target company, etc. Put this on your resume!
- Increase your subject knowledge on-the-cheap by browsing through books in your field of interest at bookstores/libraries.

Roadblock: Financial Stressors

Tip: Create and follow a budget

- Try viewing your situation as a challenge to realign your values – much of what you might have once thought of as essential expenditures may really be a relief to let go of.
- Track what you spend to be aware of your spending reality! Check out apps like Mint or Every Dollar
- See friends around free/low-cost activities: walk on the beach, have coffee instead of dinner out, throw a potluck party, go to museum on free day, etc. Be creative!
- Create a less expensive living situation- whether taking on roommates or moving to new area.

Roadblock: An Untapped Career Network

Tip: Make networking as easy and non-threatening as possible

- Inform those around you of your job search: friends, past clients/employers, others whom you already know. Then branch out to university alumni, professional groups, etc.
- Let people in groups you’re already a part of know what you’re up to, job-wise: religious, social, professional associations, online communities
- If asking for “help” is hard for you, look at your request as an opportunity for the other person: now they know you and can call on you if they need help. Show your appreciation by sending a thank you note!
- Remember that networking assistance can come in the form of advice, suggestions, referrals to other people; it includes more than just direct job leads!