



By Julie Desmond
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My friend Mike put himself in a precarious position, just in time for the holidays. He writes, “I received the dreaded call that I didn’t get the job. I should’ve realized nothing is guaranteed. The interview process was moving so smoothly that I ended up betting the family farm in the process.” Thinking he was close to an offer, Mike accepted a severance package, giving himself just sixty days to find new work. Unfortunately, the job offer went to someone else.

Overnight, Mike went from casual, passive candidate to active job seeker. That’s tough, but not insurmountable. He has a new timeline and a new approach to his job search. He will have to stay focused.

At its most dramatic, the timeline is a ticking time bomb. In reality, the world will not end on day sixty. If a job offer isn’t imminent as the deadline approaches, Mike will become more flexible about the jobs he is willing to accept, and will think about other resources he can live on if necessary. That said, hearing the tick tick in his subconscious can be a motivator.

Mike’s new timeline looks like this: One week to create a target list of contacts and companies. Three weeks to reach as many people as possible, in person, to conduct informational interviews and discuss his goals, and then 4 weeks for interviews, negotiations, and a new start.

When a job search has some urgency, creating a FRANK List can help. On paper, Mike will make four lists of ten: ten friends, ten relatives, ten associates (current or former) and ten people acquainted through networking groups.

Then Mike will review the list, circling key connections –people truly in a position to help, either because they know his work, work in a company he could go to or just really care about his future (a spouse, for instance, would be a key connection). During his three weeks of discussion, the key connections will be Mike’s first appointments; his networking will expand from there. It’s almost mind-boggling how well this system works when someone is sincerely motivated to find work.

Mike might not have a new position in sixty days, but if he follows this plan he will, by then, have

Job search on a deadline

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some good ideas about when and where he will be working next.

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