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How to handle not getting the job

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The job market is difficult, sure, but knowing how to deal with job rejection will give you the edge over your competition. Don't get downtrodden, don't feel hopeless and, whatever you do, don't take it personally.

Process what went wrong

Don't beat yourself up — just examine what happened and plan how to make a better impression in the next interview. "Monday morning quarterbacking has a place," says relationship advisor and author April Masini. "Rejection is always an opportunity to build on who and what you are."

Get back in the networking game

There's no reason to be embarrassed that you need a little extra help. Reach out to the connections you already have — they might be the link between you and your next job. "Avoid cold-calling by working with your existing contacts to help introduce you to others," suggests Michelle Coussens, dean of the School of Business at Kendall College. "So many people have lost jobs, they are often happy to help someone else in their search."

Keep applying

Don't waste a minute waiting for a company's response. Instead, stop refreshing your e-mail and continue your search. "If you don't get this one, you'll have other irons in the fire, which, psychologically, is a much better position to be in when you get a rejection letter — rather than having to start from scratch with the weight of the [rejection] on your back," says Masini.

Give yourself a better chance

To avoid the interview crickets, make sure your résumé is tailored to each position for which you're applying.

"People have the wrong résumé," says career psychologist Eileen Sharaga. "They want to be all things to all people, but they need to focus a résumé that clearly positions them in a specific job."



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Don't sit around waiting for them to call you — apply to other jobs to keep options open and your head in a positive place.

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