

Termination Checklist



This free Termination Checklist has been prepared to help job seekers displaced or made redundant due to the current COVID-19 pandemic or the resulting economic downturn.

The information provided in this Checklist is general in nature and might not apply to every job seeker's personal circumstances.

This list is meant as a practical tool to help outplaced workers deal with the realities of redundancy, move on, and start their new job search process.

The Termination Checklist is not intended to provide legal advice. Anyone who feels they have been wrongfully terminated should seek help from an appropriately qualified professional.

Best of luck in your job search endeavours!

Laurie Williams



Termination & Job Search Checklist

(Although some of the information is applicable to voluntary resignations, for the purpose of this checklist, the word "termination" covers anyone being made redundant, fired, or "let go" for any reason not of your choosing.)

Being terminated or made redundant is a painful and stressful experience. The Termination & Job Search Checklist is not intended to judge, but rather to help you navigate the way forward and find your next job.

I've broken it into sections and believe it's a good idea to have each aspect of the process under control before moving onto the next one.

HEADSPACE



It's important to understand and "accept" what's happened to you and why. The person who has been made redundant due to widespread company restructure or economic failure will feel differently to the employee who has been terminated on some performance issue, or within a probationary period. If you feel that you have been wrongfully terminated, now is the time to seek professional advice to understand your options.

Once you are "accepting" of your situation, move on to:

THE NARRATIVE



Can you answer the question "Why were you terminated by your last employer?" without sounding vindictive or crazy?

Again, this will somewhat be dependant on the circumstances of your departure. If you were part of a widespread headcount reduction due to circumstances beyond your control, that's pretty straightforward, but a performance based termination will be a different story.

Get help crafting this response, practice, and then own it!

**REFERENCES**

Is the terminating employer willing to provide a reference or support the reason for your departure? This is pretty important and best not left to chance.

If you've been part of a widespread staff reduction, the employer might be willing to offer written confirmation that your termination was a result of circumstances beyond your control. If you held a senior role, it will be helpful if the former employer will make themselves available for a reference.

You must establish your expectations on this topic as people are keen to say one thing but then don't exactly go out of their way to deliver. For example, a former employer who says they'll speak favourably about you but then won't take calls is being the opposite of helpful.

Getting your referees in order before you start the job search process is critical irrespective of why you are looking for a new job!

FINANCES AND ASSISTANCE

Before reviewing your financial position, stop and understand what if any government assistance might be available. If there's anything on offer, apply immediately!

Next, you need to take a serious look at your financial situation. Hopefully you received some sort of payout when you were made redundant so don't go spending it too quickly!

Depending on your financial situation, you may need to find a job quickly, or you may be able to take your time.

- Look at your expenses and work out how long you can last on whatever cash reserves are available to you.
- Are there things you can eliminate from your expenses?
- Maybe there's some recurring payment or subscriptions you can cancel or at least pause until your cash flow improves?
- Talk to your bank or landlord and tell them what's happening.
- Pretending it will all go away won't work for long, so get out in front of the problem and make whatever arrangements you can. In my experience, banks and other creditors are okay to deal with as long as you're honest and up front with them.
- Yes, there will come a point at which they can no longer help you, but hopefully by taking action quickly you'll avoid getting to that point of no return.



THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS



There's no way to "sell" the job search process as anything other than stressful. You will deal with some nice and helpful people, but you will also encounter every sort of idiot imaginable, be subject to subtle and not so subtle discrimination, experience poor "customer service" from recruiters and potential employers, and more.

The only way to survive this is to try and see it as a process. A numbers game. Most importantly, try not to take it personally. (I know, easier said than done!)

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY



Your strategy will somewhat depend on the urgency of your need to find employment. For simplicity, I've limited this commentary to two distinct groups:

URGENT - you need to secure replacement income ASAP.

This will generally mean seeking out any kind of paid work that meets your financial needs, and which you are capable of performing. This could be warehouse or other logistics work, call centre, customer service, construction, manual labour. A lot of these types of jobs will be via labour hire firms so in addition to job boards you might want to register with the larger mainstream recruiters and labour hire specialists.

You should also do the basic job search activities including:

- Directly contact other employers in your specific area of expertise to make them aware of your availability
- Monitor job boards such as Seek, Indeed, LinkedIn
- Engage with your industry network connections and tell them of your availability

LESS URGENT - this suggests that you have reasonable financial reserves and can take a more discerning approach to the job search process, so start with a high level evaluation of your career options. Are you simply looking to replicate your last role with a new employer, or is it time to consider a career move into other positions or industries? If you want to take your career in a new direction I suggest that you get some input from a trusted mentor or industry specialist to confirm that you're not wasting your time.

SET EXPECTATIONS - HOPE FOR THE BEST BUT PLAN FOR THE WORST



This is a favourite saying of fictional action hero Jack Reacher, but it also can be applied to the job search process. Yes, someone will get the first job they apply for, but many more will face multiple rejections before getting that job offer.

**GET YOUR "PAPERWORK" IN ORDER****1. The Resume**

The primary tool for all job seekers is the good old resume. No matter who you are, or how good you think you are, you need a resume. The quickest way to kill your job application before it even starts is to tell the recruiter "I've never needed a resume". This just makes you sound arrogant, so don't say it – EVER.

There's no shortage of resume templates available so creating one is not a big deal. I strongly suggest that if you've been getting by in recent years by updating your resume from 10+ years ago, start a new one from scratch. The old one is probably not doing you any favours.

See [this link](#) for more info on resumes.

2. LinkedIn profile

In many ways the LinkedIn profile is your resume online.

Unless there's some really good reason not to have a LinkedIn profile, this is a vital part of your job seeker toolkit. Like the resume, a LinkedIn profile can be poor, good, or great so make sure you're at least aiming for "good"!

See [this link](#) for more info on LinkedIn profiles.

3. Cover Letter

This is the most overlooked element of the job search toolkit. The majority of cover letters do nothing whatsoever to enhance the application. In fact, many of them will get your application rejected. A cover letter addressed to the wrong person referring to a different job is not glowing endorsement of your "attention to detail".

A good cover letter is correctly addressed, and draws attention to the ways in which the applicant meets the employer's criteria as detailed in the job listing. Generally, you will need a couple of different cover letters which can then be "customised" for the individual job. This is not as hard or time consuming as it sounds.

See [this link](#) for more info on cover letters.

**MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF YOUR AVAILABILITY**

To be successful, this needs a little bit of finesse, so take a tangential rather than direct approach.

Don't put someone in a position of having to say "no". Ask for help rather than a job. Instead of contacting a friend or business associate asking "Do you have any jobs for me?", take the approach of "I'm looking for a new challenge. Please keep your eyes and ears open for me and let me know if you hear of anything suitable".

Bear in mind that right now, most people are a bit uncertain regarding job security...

MONITOR JOB BOARDS

Seek and Indeed are probably the most likely sources here in Australia but there may be other resources in your specific industry sector.

CONTACT SPECIALIST RECRUITERS

Make yourself known to industry specialist recruiters or rekindle past relationships. Understand that in an economic downturn, recruiters may not have a lot of opportunities, but it still pays to make contact.

In doing so, you need to be a bit protective of your time. If a senior and respected recruiter in your industry sector invites you to call in for a face-to-face meeting then try to make it happen. Even if it doesn't result in immediate job opportunities, it might pay dividends later on. On the other hand, being asked to jump through hoops by a junior mainstream recruiter who is simply following their employers process to "get you on the books" may be a less productive use of your time.

ADOPT A SUITABLE & PROFESSIONAL JOB SEARCH MINDSET

By this I mean, be alert to what's happening and remember that you only have one chance to make a good first impression. This includes simple things like being contactable, being professional and aware.

Be especially mindful of how you answer the phone. If it's not a "good time", let the call go to voice mail and call back when you're prepared.