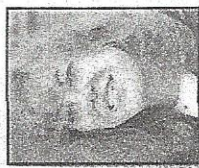


COMMENTARY

'Tis the season to find a job

PITTSFIELD — Many job seekers take a break from searching for employment during the holidays. It's a hectic time of year, and it can be challenging to juggle all of the responsibilities of the season and keep a job hunt moving forward. But, if you buy into this myth about not looking for work in December, you lose one of the better job-searching seasons of the year.



Heather Boulger
Inside the Job Market



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

It's easy to get carried away over the holidays or to suspend a job search because of seasonal responsibilities. But perseverance is key, because December can be a great month to find a job.

in the game:

- There are jobs, and employers are hiring. Check out the job boards regularly at MassHire-Berkshire Career Center, Indeed, iBerkshires' Jobs Thing, Monster, BerkshireJobs.com, BerkshireEagle.com and Career Builder.
- Network! You couldn't pick

- Don't sit around waiting for your dream job to show up. Get out and volunteer or take part-time, seasonal and/or temporary work. Employers look highly on those who take the initiative and stay positive. Temporary jobs can often become permanent ones.
- Get organized. Design a new resume, post online and be methodical about your job search. Do something relating to your job search every day.
- Avoid bad habits. Get into shape and focus on your health. Don't let the negative voices in your head get the best of you.
- Try to keep a positive and enthusiastic attitude, and be patient. It takes time to find employment, but an upbeat attitude will help you be successful. Remember, today's new education and training opportunity can become tomorrow's job.

The holiday season offers time for thoughts about family and future as we celebrate religious festivals and begin a new year. For people who are unemployed or are concerned about company downsizing, the season can be filled with great uncertainty.

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SURVIVING THE SEASON

Here are some tips to keep you

a better time of year to attend social and business holiday functions to connect with people who could help you. Tell everyone you know that you are looking for a job. Someone that knows your strengths may know of an available position that would be perfect for you.

Boulger

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For those who are challenged by unemployment, please know that job opportunities can be found during this season. Visit MassHireBerkshireCC.com for assistance on job search, career planning, job listings, job clubs, workshops on job search techniques, data on labor market trends, resources to help find the right training opportunities and tools to help you conduct an effective job search.

THE HOLIDAYS AT WORK

December can be an especially stressful month at work, with holiday seasonal pressures and many end-of-year business deadlines. Some people celebrate holidays this time of year, while others do not. Everyone has their own feelings and expectations about this time of year with some being

excited and others dreading the season.

To make this year's festivities more enjoyable, try some of these tips to help get you through the holiday workplace and preserve harmony and sanity on your team:

- Give everyone the benefit of the doubt in December. It's a chaotic and stressful time. We are all carrying a heavy load.
- Be respectful of your work environment. Avoid going overboard with holiday decorations. The holidays can be a festive and distracting time, but don't forget that your productivity must remain high.
- Wash your hands frequently. Winter is the main cold and flu season. The last thing you want to do is spread viruses putting infected hands into a candy dish or by just shaking hands.
- Don't skip the holiday work party. You may dread attending, but it's a work function, so you should attend. Smile, grin and bear it. Act

professionally. Don't over-consume.

- Keep gift giving to a minimum. Most people would rather not exchange gifts with co-workers, so if you decide on giving any gifts, keep them small or opt for doing something for the entire department.
- Express gratitude. Remember to thank your colleagues, vendors and customers for their support over the past year. Being grateful increases happiness and motivation.
- And finally, be good to yourself. It's easy to over-commit, overextend and criticize yourself as the year comes to a close. Try to exercise daily, don't skimp on your sleep, and try to eat healthy. Take a moment and remember all the good things you accomplished, earned, experienced and discovered in 2018. Celebrate your awesomeness and get ready to dive into 2019.

Heather Boulger is the executive director of the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board in Pittsfield.