

ACMA

Associated Career  
Management Australia



# SURVIVING RETRENCHMENT

HOW TO FIND YOUR IDEAL CAREER AND LAND A GREAT JOB

BY TONY CROSBY, RPCDP, FCDA, CMF, CAHRI

**ASSOCIATED CAREER  
MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA**  
provides expert  
Career Coaching and  
Outplacement services  
Australia-wide  
to help you find the right  
job, faster.



Dear career seeker

**Retrenchment represents an opportunity to revitalise your career and move into the next stage of your life...**

**IT IS A BEGINNING NOT AN END!**

Surveys have show that over 70% of workers are unhappy in their existing jobs anyway, so this is your big chance. (Don't waste it). Despite being well qualified and experienced many retrenched job seekers still have a difficult time finding the right job.

It doesn't have to be this way. You can find a satisfying, exciting career that is right for you and become an expert at successfully landing the job you want.

As a senior career consultant working across many industries I see a lot of people who are lost and unhappy in their careers or stalled in their job search. Many of my clients thought they had job security before their organizations made them redundant.

I noticed that some of my clients had become virtually obsolete because they weren't in jobs that suited their personalities and interests. They simply weren't motivated to keep learning. They were merely surviving rather than enjoying what they were doing.

Since 1991 ACMA has been developing expertise, innovative programs, resources and online technologies that directly assist people (throughout Australia) from all backgrounds and occupations to avoid career 'death traps', and instead make a big step forward in their careers and lives.

You can immediately take control of your career; by investing some time and effort now you can avoid taking an unsatisfying job or long periods of unemployment.

This report contains tips in two areas vital to your career success:

**1. FINDING YOUR CAREER DIRECTION**

**2. GETTING A GOOD JOB FAST** (if you already know what type of work you want you can go straight to this section)

Many people don't think enough about what they really want to do. Even if you are in a hurry to get a job, knowing clearly what you want is important for two reasons:

- **Search focus** – it helps you more tightly focus on your target employers which is essential for some job search strategies.
- **Self-marketing** – employers are more impressed by applicants who know what they want & why they want to work for their organisation.

Our 7 Module Outplacement program is designed to intensively manage all stages of your career transition so that you obtain THE RIGHT JOB and advance your career.

Good luck with your career journey!



Tony Crosby FCDA, CMF, CAHRI

Managing Director

ASSOCIATED CAREER MANAGEMENT AUSTRALIA

A C M A

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# 1. FIRST REACTIONS, THOUGHTS AND GUIDANCE

A job is more than employment; it's financial security. It's a reliable ritual that gives our lives structure and purpose. For many people, the job is an identity, an expression of responsibility, a sign of competence. It's an internal barometer of having things "under control." For some, a job is even more than that. Their social lives are built around their job. The very people they would turn to for friendship, love and support are now "on the other side" of the employment divide.

Suggestions from friends and family to "look on the bright side" are well-intended but misguided. Equally problematic is the self-imposed "stiff upper lip." Pressure to hide your feelings (real or imagined) can prevent you from grieving – which, in turn, can delay your healing.

Someone needs to tell you that it's OK to feel badly, to grieve. In fact, it's a necessary healing process after the experience of losing your job. Yes, it really is grief, the same emotional journey you go through when you've lost a loved one. Please don't discount this fact by saying, "A job is not a loved one."

Denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. The first four items don't always go in order; nor do we spend an equal amount of time in each stage.

Wondering how to climb out of this unfortunate experience? For now, just give yourself time to grieve...you need it!

As they say, "The only way out is through."

But how?

Follow the tips below, and you'll be on your way to recovery from job loss. As you implement these tactics, be at least as responsible to yourself as you were to your employer.

## 1. Do a gut check

It's hard to know how long is too long to be "in mourning." If you're not sure, consider setting a personal timetable for moving on.

## 2. Limit the 'pity party'

It's also difficult to know how much is too much indulgence of your feelings. Give your friends and family permission to (gently) tell you when you've overextended your period of self-pity.

## 3. Form a new daily routine

Follow it. Get out of your pajamas and get on with your productive day (this will make #6 much easier).

## 4. Set attainable, actionable goals

Monitor your progress. "Get a job" is not a specific goal. Instead, consider smaller and more measurable objectives, such as

- research five target companies or
- connect with three new recruiters now.

## 5. Exercise

It will boost your energy and improve your mood.

## 6. Get out of the house

Volunteer for a worthy charity. Attend a networking event. Meet a friend for lunch, etc.

## 7. Take care of YOU

Be as patient, loving and understanding of yourself as you are of others when they're under severe stress.

We know these steps may not be easy, but they are simple. Remember, we have 'road tested' every one of these strategies for you. We know they work. There is no doubt in our mind that you'll bounce back better than ever.

*We believe. Do you?*

## 2. FINDING YOUR CAREER DIRECTION – WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



### TIP 1: Don't just settle for the first thing that comes along

Invest some time in identifying what you want, what you have to offer, and what is out there. If you rush into big decisions you may find you have missed a better opportunity or headed off in the wrong direction.

It can help you answer the big question of “what do I want to do with the rest of my life” if you approach it with a logical step-by-step process.

The career direction program we have developed uses a seven module integrated program designed to assist you to find the ideal position as quickly as possible:

THE 4 FOUNDATIONS	THE 7 STEPS
Self-awareness	1. Take responsibility
	2. Self assess
	3. Define success - your purpose and vision of the future
Opportunity awareness	4. Expand, explore and evaluate your options
Decision making	5. Decide and set goals (job search, study and/or business targets)
Transition skills	6. Plan and act!
	7. Stay alert and enjoy the journey!

By learning to apply these seven steps you can become highly skilled at managing your own career.

This, however, is NOT to say that you should have it all worked out before you take any job. Sometimes you need to get a temporary job while you work on this. A lot of jobs can be a step in the right direction and lead to unexpected results.



### TIP 2: Take full responsibility for your career and your life

This is the foundation for all success. Specifically you need to take responsibility for:

- Your career (others can help but no one, including a career counsellor, can make your decisions or do it for you – it's your life!)
- Your employability (the only real job security is the career security that comes from offering up-to-date skills that are still in demand)
- Your “programming” (parental influences and social conditioning)

Don't blame anyone for anything about your situation in life. The moment you do, you lose power. A few simple ideas, if understood and practiced deeply, can make a huge difference in your life. This is one of them.



### TIP 3: Begin by making your mind your friend – disarm your self-sabotages

Self-sabotages take the form of your inner dialogue with yourself. How you see things – the stories you create in your mind – determine your experience of life. External events or circumstances are only triggers for your feelings. If, for example, you go to a job interview but don't get the job you could say to yourself two very different things:

1. **Unhelpful thinking** – “I'm not skilled/educated/young/old enough. This is terrible that I failed.”

Result: You feel bad, stop job searching for a week or longer and miss a great opportunity.

2. **Helpful thinking** – “They thought someone else was more suited for the position. This may be a good thing... there is probably a better opportunity out there waiting for me.”

Result: You feel okay, continue job searching and get a position to which you are better suited.

*The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, and a hell of heaven.*

- John Milton



You can see how the same external event or trigger can create two very different results. Whether you feel good or bad stems from how your mind interprets situations. Your mind is very powerful. It will either sabotage your career efforts or allow you to create the career and life path you most deeply desire.

**So what can you do about it?** Pay attention to your thinking. Get to know and recognise your patterns. Say to yourself “Oh, that’s just my ‘doubter’ working overtime” or “That’s just my inner critic giving me a hard time.” Don’t worry about it, just step back, observe yourself and then look for an alternative view which is more helpful. To be able to laugh at yourself and your self-sabotages is incredibly empowering... and a lot more enjoyable than getting stuck in them!

While we may not be fully responsible for the programming we received as children, we are, as adults, the only ones who can be responsible for correcting it.

For career success improve your mind as much as possible but don’t wait for perfection. Swing into action as soon as you can and learn from your mistakes and your victories along the way. EVERYONE makes mistakes as they try out different jobs – that is all part of the learning process.



**TIP 4: Develop powerful attitudes towards your work**

Powerful career attitudes include:

- **Every job is a learning opportunity.**  
I don’t just work for the money... I work to learn new skills, develop my network of friends and contacts, open up new opportunities, and do something positive for others.
- **My work-life should benefit all concerned,** my employer, my customers, and myself.
- **While I accept this work position I’ll do the best I can.**  
If I can’t find a way to be satisfied in my job then it is up to me to find a better position rather than just complain about it.



**TIP 5: Self assess – work out what you want and what you have to offer**

Who are you? What do you have to offer others? What do you want from life in return?

Make the effort to ask yourself questions and keep asking as your career unfolds. As you do this, pay particular attention to anything which hints of your purpose and passion. What interests you? What would you do even if money was not a factor?

What kind of person are you? Do you like to work alone or with lots of people, focus on ideas or the practical realities, solve problems with logic or provide empathetic support to help

others, run a tight ship with lots of structure and organisation or go with the flow and stay flexible?

These are all an expression of your personality. Your personality tends to support success and competencies in some fields more than others.

One way to identify aspects of your personality is to observe yourself and ask for others’ perceptions of you. Another valuable approach is to use personality assessment tests.

Professional career counsellors can assist your self awareness and career targeting by providing computer-based psychometric assessments of your personality and interests.



**TIP 6: Identify your interest areas**

Your interests can provide valuable clues as to where you will find work that you will become passionate about.

Imagine the below diagram is a party of seven very different groups of people standing around talking.

**If you were feeling confident that day, which group would you be MOST drawn to?** Which group would you go talk with second... and third (if there was time)? Number these groups 1, 2, or 3.



Now get on the Internet and look for the online Job Guide - <http://www.gooduniversitiesguide.com.au/career/search#.Vr1Z7DFf3IU>.

Experiment by entering different fields to develop an understanding of various jobs and sectors. **Search by – Type of Work.** Their categories have a lot of overlap but it can be a good place to expand your career ideas by checking out your favourite groups from above.



**TIP 7: Follow your sense of purpose**

A sense of your purpose in life is your deepest internal compass for navigating your way through whatever changes take place in the world of work. Being “on-purpose” with your career unlocks your passion – that spark and energy which drives your career development and learning and at the same time makes you someone employers want to hire and retain. It can also be the source of deep motivation which can power you through the challenges of creating your own business when the time is right. You will need to write it in your own words but your unique purpose will probably fall into one of these eight broad categories of career purpose:

1. Help heal others
2. Teach, coach, enlighten, and entertain
3. Improve living conditions
4. Meet practical human needs
5. Safeguard and manage the environment
6. Express beauty
7. Support justice and fairness
8. Set an example of love and service

Which do you identify with most?

Circle yours in the above list or write your own category here:

.....  
 .....

*When work is soulless, life stifles and dies.*  
 - Albert Camus



**TIP 8 – Expand and explore your options**

People often choose careers based on knowing about only a small number of jobs they have been exposed to through friends and family members or perhaps seen on television. As a result it is often years later, if ever, that they discover by chance a career option they would have loved if they’d found it earlier. You need to cast your net wide at this time and expand your awareness of all your options that are out there.

Consider your self-knowledge and sense of purpose. What do they suggest? Look at a wide range of idea sources and develop your ‘long list’ of between 15 to 40 possibilities.

Idea sources include:

1. Job suggestions from career assessments conducted by your ACMA career management consultant
2. Products and services you like
3. Causes and groups you identify with
4. People – talk to as many people as possible, find out about that they do and ask for ideas
5. Yellow pages phone directory, situation vacant columns, tertiary study course catalogues
6. Internet sites.

Be sure to consider lots of jobs you are not familiar with and don’t limit your thinking to just traditional careers. There are new types of work being created every day and some of the more rewarding work doesn’t even have job names yet. Consider a wide range of possibilities such as:

- Same career but in a new organisation or location
- Combination and hybrid careers (e.g. a software programmer who develops an interest in real estate and develops a new computer program for the real estate industry.)
- Composite careers (2 or 3 part-time jobs)
- Contract, consulting or temp work
- Small business or home businesses
- Part time and/or voluntary work
- Tertiary study

For some people the best reason for them to get a traditional job is for them to gain skills, knowledge, and contacts that will enable them to start their own business later. This is how many business owners, independent contractors and consultants get started. So what type of business would you like to own? OK... now, go get a job in a similar business, even if it’s at the very bottom, as the first step.

Your ACMA career management consultant can refer you to numerous websites and other information sources to assist in researching your career options.



**TIP 9: Talk before you leap – always do information meetings before your final decision**

After having read as much as you can about a career option BUT before making a big commitment to a new career path it is vital that you first talk to some people who are actually working in that type of work.

These meetings, which are sometimes also called information interviews, are a crucial step in career decision-making. People will tell you things face-to-face that you will never find in writing. They may also help you in unexpected ways.

Career changers who spend years studying to enter an occupation without doing information meetings are often disappointed with the realities they find. Don’t make the same

mistake – do your information meetings BEFORE you choose an option and invest years of your life and thousands of dollars pursuing it.

Information meetings are short, focused discussions which you should prepare specific questions for prior to the meeting. Questions are based on filling in the gaps, checking what you have already learnt about the option, and going deeper.

Your ACMA career management consultant can help you with a list of the types of questions you could ask at an information interview.



**TIP 10: If you want to get lucky – take action!**

It is widely recognised that successful people are people of action. They may make mistakes but they pick themselves back up, dust themselves off, and try again. The more you get out into the world, talk to people, and have a go, the more successful you will be in the long run.

Now is a good time to remember some of the words that call us to action:

*"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it! For boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now!"*

Johann Goethe

*Nothing will be attempted if all possible objections must first be overcome.*

- Samuel Johnson

*"Our doubts are our traitors and make us lose the good we oft might gain by fearing to attempt."*


William Shakespeare

*"Just do it!"*

(As declared by the well-known footwear advertisement)

The reflection, research and planning recommended above will strengthen the effectiveness of your actions. However, there are some things that need to be learnt by trial and error. Goethe went so far as to say, "Self-knowledge is best learned, not by contemplation, but by action."

You will also maximise your chances for 'getting lucky' with your career by being active and engaged with the world.



# New Career Chapter One

*Failure is not the worst thing in the world. The worst is not to try.*

- Unknown

You can improve your career by five action-oriented skills that will make you more “lucky” with your career:

1. **Curiosity** – exploring new learning opportunities
2. **Persistence** – continuing to exert effort despite setbacks
3. **Flexibility** – being open to changing your beliefs, ideas and attitudes when called for
4. **Optimism** – viewing even challenging situations as offering possible opportunities
5. **Risk taking** – willingness to take action in the face of uncertain outcomes

If you stay open and alert for unexpected opportunities and new possibilities your career will reap the rewards!



**TIP 11: Think about the big picture – not just a job!**

The gap between the winners and losers on many levels in this game we call the ‘global economy’ is increasing. There are increasing changes to the job market. We may not often like them but there is good news also. There are greater than ever opportunities for career success, wealth and making a positive difference if you play the game smart.

If you want to be one of the winners and perhaps even be in a position to assist others in the game you need to consciously develop your game plan for your career-life.

There are three broad potential strategies for your career-life game plan in the 21st century: 1) wealth creation, 2) rewarding work, and 3) voluntary simplicity.

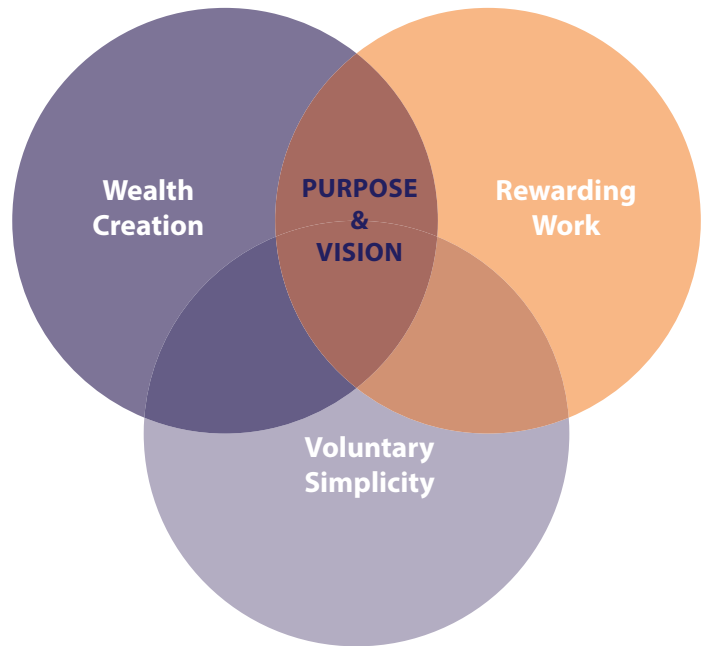
### Game plan 1 – Wealth creation

Wealth creation is about increasing your power on the physical level by developing intellectual, physical, and financial assets which eventually give you the time freedom and the resources to live your purpose independent (if you choose) from a paid job.

Many of my older outplacement clients would have been in a much better situation if they had educated and applied themselves in the wealth creation area 10 years before they were made redundant. An effective exit strategy can be empowering to your career.

### Game plan 2 – Rewarding work

Identifying the types of work most likely to be personally rewarding is the focus of the tips in the first section and what career consultants normally help their clients with. The basic



idea is that to be successful at your work you need to enjoy it, or even better, have a passionate love for it.

The strength of this game plan is that if you, at least, like what you do, you'll probably be good at it and engage in the necessary life-long learning to stay in demand in the job marketplace.

But be warned – rewarding work often doesn't come easy. You may need to work hard, make some sacrifices and some smart choices to find or create your rewarding work.

### Game plan 3 – Voluntary simplicity

In the voluntary simplicity game the emphasis shifts from consuming to relationships, family, well being and creativity. To have self-directed power over your career-life you need to recognize and separate from advertising and social conditioning which pushes you to over-consume and become controlled by your debt.

This is not about living in poverty. It's about being a conscious consumer rather than just a conditioned consumer. Do a Google search on the words “voluntary simplicity” for a heap of ideas and resources on this game plan.

Most people are best served by combining these three strategies or individual game plans. How it will best suit you to integrate the three game plans will become clearer as you self assess and define your purpose and vision.

Your purpose and vision for your career-life are what integrates and guides your game plans. To be successful in applying them you will need to educate yourself over the long-term in each of these three areas.

If you like, your ACMA career management consultant can help you get started on this important process.



Send  
your CV to No. 091

Self  
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**LATEST JOBS!**

**FIND  
YOUR  
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**NEED A CHANGE?**

Check out our jobs -



**TIP 6: Always be prepared for the door**

You never know when you might find yourself unemployed... or come across a great opportunity to advance your career. Hence, be prepared. Keep a list of your work achievements with specific details and update it regularly. Keep your resume updated. Be thinking about what skills and experience you need to add to your portfolio and what would be a good next step in your career.

Don't expect your employer to do this for you. Remember, your employability is your responsibility.

**TIP 7: Enquire as to permanent AND temporary work**

Many employers may not be ready to put on a full time permanent employee but will be interested in talking to someone who is available on a more flexible basis to meet their peak staffing needs. If the organisation is attractive to you this is a good way to get a foot in the door and often leads to full time work.

This is a particularly good strategy for 'breaking into' attractive government jobs. Your ACMA career management consultant can give you more specific advice on how to do this.

**TIP 8: Work closely with your referees**

Good referees are very valuable. Don't take them for granted. Be sure to ask their permission to have them as a referee. Keep the relationship strong by remembering to do little things such as send them birthday cards, Christmas cards, and copies of articles which you think might interest them.

Once you have their permission in general doesn't bother them every time you put down their name as a referee. However, you should make it clear to the employer or recruiter that they should tell you if the selection process gets to the point where they will soon be contacting your referees. (This is normally only the top applicants after they have been interviewed.) When you know they will soon be contacted, call your referees and send them the position description or job advertisement, a copy of your application, and a concise list of your main achievements while working with them. The purpose of this list of achievements is to prompt their memories and prepare them to make you sound like a million dollars (or whatever your salary will be) when the employer contacts them.

**TIP 9: Send thank you notes**

Always remember to send a thank you note to anyone who makes their time available to meet with you or helps you in your job search. This includes your networking contacts, job interviewers and employment agency consultants. This can be an email or a written letter. If you didn't get a business card their receptionist can give you their email address.

**TIP 10: Four things you must NOT do**

**DON'T just go through the motions of a job search.** Find something you can get yourself excited about going after. If you don't know what that is, seek career counselling and assessment.

**DON'T do the same old things and say the same old things that everyone else does.** Be original in some way.

**DON'T just go for jobs in large well known organisations.** These are the most competitive places to seek work. **Smaller organisations (less than 150 staff) create most new jobs** and are often better places to work.

**Don't lose touch with reality.** Think big, aim high, but be willing to start from where you are. Be realistic. Don't get stuck looking for the perfect job – where you save the world and make \$200,000 a year straight out of school or university. There are times when you may need to get a stop-gap job while you work on a longer term plan.

**TIP 11: Take care of yourself**

Career transition, particularly when it is associated with forced unemployment, can be a very stressful experience. It is normal to go through some real down periods and to question your value and your abilities. To help you handle this period:

- **Share your feelings with people you trust** – family, friends, a counsellor or a career coach.
- **Reflect** – career transition is a time to re-evaluate your life direction and make some changes for the better. It is also an opportunity to deepen your perspectives on life.
- **Exercise** – not only does it keep you healthy it also improves your mood.
- **Maintain balance** – watch that you are sleeping, eating healthy, and connecting to people. Seek help if these or alcohol and drug use becomes an issue.
- **Learn and help others** – take short courses or read some helpful books. Making this a time of personal and professional development will improve your self-esteem and your interview performance. So will helping others in some way. Consider seeking some volunteer work if unemployed for more than about 12 weeks.

**TIP 12: Get professional help – career assessment and/or job search counselling**

It is now normal to change jobs every 3 to 5 years. What this means to you is that you need to become an expert in managing your own career transitions.

Your career counsellor can help you develop the skills, techniques, attitudes, and knowledge that are vital to your career success but rarely taught at school or even university. These skills and techniques have both broad long-term rewards and immediate practical benefits in obtaining your next position.

But even great career counsellors don't have a crystal ball. Instead, they offer good ideas and resources that can help you find your own answers! They would rather teach you to fish for yourself than just try to tell you what you should do.

The benefits of the ACMA career management program & assistance may include:

- Clearer career direction and improved career satisfaction
- Reduced periods of unemployment or underemployment
- Enhanced career management and job search skills you can use throughout your career
- Improved life balance with the associated health and relationship benefits
- Better short and long-term financial rewards
- Increased confidence and energy!





## 4. CRITICAL TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND THAT WILL HELP YOU TO DEAL WITH UNEXPECTED JOB LOSS



### Keep opinions to yourself

Totally resist sharing any negative feelings directly or indirectly, (e.g. social media) that you may have with others about your previous employer or the retrenchment process. This is a chance for you to stay professional and demonstrate how you can manage change. Above all, remember you will need a reference!



### Steer clear

of recruiters, prospective employers and network connections if you are upset or angry about being retrenched until you have settled down from the event and can communicate a positive view of your past and future.



### Resist

any temptation to broadcast your resume all over the market. Your approach to the employment market needs to be systematic and targeted. Your resume should be treated like gold and only sent to those organisations or individuals you have assessed as fitting your key job search criteria. Your resume bouncing indiscriminately around the market will not help your cause.



### Develop a succinct, clear and unambiguous message

about why you left your previous employer e.g. "I thoroughly enjoyed my 5 years with XYZ Company, however, due to adverse market conditions the company was forced to restructure and made a number of roles redundant, one of which was mine". Be careful not to embellish or waffle and above all resist any temptation to explicitly or implicitly convey any criticism of your previous employer or the retrenchment process.



### Avoid making big decisions at this time

(if you can avoid it) particularly financial ones. In fact, if you don't have a financial advisor then seek one out. Most will provide a complementary first consultation free, but don't assume this and make sure you check first if any fees will be charged.



### Family & friends will want to help

Family and friends can be great source of comfort and help during these times so let them even it's just an ear to bend. Non judgemental and overall good listeners can be hard to find so if you have them in your range, avail yourself of their company and wisdom. That said, the converse can also be true – try to avoid negative unhelpful people who stir unhelpful feelings in you and choose to reconnect when you're more settled in your career direction and next steps.



### Stay fit

You will find that making sure that you are eating and sleeping properly will help. If you are having trouble doing either seek professional help, your GP is a good place to start. Similarly, exercising is known to be a great way to relieve feelings of stress whether that's joining a gym or simply going for good walk or some other form of exercise you enjoy. You will find that this will help you to cope with the change process.



### Be kind to yourself

Take time out to do something nice just for you that you really like doing but perhaps don't get the time to do ordinarily. Remember, if you are seeking re-employment you will soon be fully focused with a new job so take the opportunity to do things you otherwise would find hard to find the time for like completing a long overdue unfinished project.



### Be proactive

If you're sitting at home waiting for the phone to ring you could be waiting a long time! You'll be best served by helping others to help you. To do this you need to be sure about whom and what you would want others to help you with in regard to employment if that's what you're seeking. However, a cautionary note, be sure to remember that don't venture into the employment market until you are future-focused, positive, clear minded and settled with regard to handling the 'change' journey. Simply put, if you're motivated in the right direction then it is more likely that others will be more likely to be motivated to help you as well.



### **Career choices not chances**

You have been provided outplacement assistance so be sure to make full use of it! This is a unique opportunity to reassess your career, plan the next steps in line with your career goals and plan the next stanza in your career. Career consultants are experts in career management and can help in number of ways. This includes assisting you to adjust to the change and in establishing realistic career options that will provide satisfaction combined with honing your job search skills to secure the targeted next step in your career. Importantly, they will help you with practical elements such as preparation of an impactful resume and interview skills. Remember, your career consultant's sole mission is to be alongside you as a career coach to help you move toward your career goals. They will help you achieve success, as defined by you, simply and practicality in a supportive and confidential environment.



### **Work closely with your ACMA Outplacement consultant at all stages!**



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**A C M A**

**Associated Career  
Management Australia**

**National Head Office**

National telephone: 1800 245 380

Email: [info@career-manage.com.au](mailto:info@career-manage.com.au)

Website: [www.career-manage.com.au](http://www.career-manage.com.au)

**Office Locations**

Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth,  
Adelaide, Canberra, Cairns, Darwin &  
Auckland