

Resiliency and the Job Search

Applying to jobs or grad/professional school goes hand-in-hand with developing resiliency – the ability to bounce back and keep going after life’s inevitable stumbles. The Career Center is here to support you as you face these challenges and work to build your resiliency.

3 Things to Remember When Facing Rejection

1. **It’s okay to be disappointed.** Feeling disheartened or losing confidence after rejection is natural. Believe it or not, these feelings say something *good* about you! They mean you care about what you’re doing.
2. **Everyone – and we mean *everyone* – faces rejection during the job search and/or grad school application process.** Whether it’s sending an application that disappears into the void, failing to receive a call-back after an interview, or getting all the way to the final round and then hearing a ‘no,’ you are not alone in facing the challenge of rejection. See below for stories from individuals who have managed similar feelings/situations.
3. **Your self-worth is not tied to a single (or even several!) rejections.** While rejection is difficult, it doesn’t diminish all you’ve accomplished thus far, nor does it predict your ability to succeed in the future.

5 Ways to Build Resiliency

1. **Evaluate your belief system:** In the big picture, how do you think about the stress of rejection? Are there ways you could you perceive it differently, i.e., in more helpful and productive terms?
2. **Be self-aware:** Reflect on your levels of resiliency for different areas of life, e.g., personal relationships, academic life, career-related plans. Are you more resilient in some areas and less so in others? Can you apply some of the things that make you more resilient in particular areas to this situation?
3. **Make changes that are within your control:** Once you understand your belief system and what’s causing you stress, think about how you could make changes that would diminish stress. As prepared as you may be to apply or interview for a job, you still may not receive an offer. Knowing that you can’t change this (understandably stressful) reality, can you change how you think about it? (See “How to Reframe Situations So They Create Less Stress” below.)
4. **Put things in perspective:** Ask yourself the questions a resilient person asks, such as “How much will this setback matter next week? A month from now?” “What are some small steps I can take to move forward?”
5. **Examine your coping strategies:** You may need different approaches for different stressors or aspects of life, so think about which coping mechanisms work best for you. Strategies could include exercising to clear your head, talking to a trusted friend, or making a list of worries to help you define what is/isn’t in your control. Have reasonable expectations: This is a process that involves patience and time. In fact, most people do not get the first or second (or third ... etc.) job for which they apply.

Additional Resources

- [Tufts Career Center Advising](#): Whether it’s strengthening application materials and/or interview skills or finding additional opportunities, meet with a career advisor to discuss strategies for moving forward.
- [Tufts Counseling and Mental Health](#): A diverse team of clinicians provides free and confidential resources, including tools for managing stress and anxiety.
- [How to Move on When You Didn’t Land the Job](#): From thoughts on our tendency to overanalyze and our inherent “negativity bias” to ways to build ‘job esteem,’ get tips for refocusing your energy after a rejection.
- [How to Reframe Situations So They Create Less Stress](#): Positive vs. negative thinking and how it influences your daily self-talk.
- [The Harvard Success-Failure Project](#): Features resiliency resources, e.g., [Strategies for Addressing Perfectionism](#), as well as [Reflections on Rejection](#) with video and text reflections from Harvard University deans, faculty, students and alumni, including their actual rejection letters.
- [The Stanford Resiliency Project](#) : A compilation of recent articles and resources on resilience, including [Resilience Project Videos](#) with personal stories about finding meaning and value in the midst of failure.