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## 3 Tips for Handling the 'Between Jobs' Status

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What should you be doing while you're between jobs? A career coach describes ways to deal with a transition between jobs. Hint: Don't call yourself 'unemployed.'

**Always** avoid the "unemployed" title. Create a business card that shows you're a dynamic resource working on interesting projects until the right opportunity comes along. In these times of free agency, you are in control, and steering a course between traditional jobs, temporary projects and periods of self-employment is the norm.

**Sometimes** attend professional events. I say "sometimes" because it's not enough to be just another face in the crowd at these events--that won't bring you to the attention of employers. Try leading a discussion panel or offering to be a guest speaker. You can also start your own resource board for fellow industry professionals to share marketplace news, activities and perspectives.

A small group of 4-10 people meeting regularly for coffee is all it takes, and while such groups exist online, face-to-face meetings are the most effective way to build community. Studies show that 30 percent of executives admit to having hundreds of digital connections but very few physical friends.

**Never** launch a conversation by talking about yourself. When meeting people, steer the conversation to the other person, listen closely and show meaningful interest in the other person. Start by asking a few questions about their current projects, recent events they've attended, their hobbies, and so on. Based on their responses, you'll come up with ideas and observations to keep the conversation going.

*William Ellermeyer has more than 30 years' experience as an executive career transition consultant based in California. He also speaks regularly about career management, entrepreneurship and "un-retirement."*

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