

GET THE JOB

Understanding Employment Gaps

Why They're More Common – and Less Damaging – Than You Think

A gap in your résumé used to feel like something to hide. But in today's job market, it's far more common — and far less of a deal-breaker — than it once was.

Whether your time away from work was due to caregiving, health issues, education, travel or a layoff, you're not alone. Many employers now recognize that life happens, and what matters more is what you've done — and what you're ready to do next.

BE HONEST AND DIRECT

You don't need to provide every detail, but it's important to acknowledge the gap clearly if asked. A short explanation is usually enough.

For example:

"I stepped away from full-time work to care for a family member, and now I'm ready to return to a permanent role."

The key is to keep the tone confident and forward-looking. Employers are often more concerned about how you communicate the gap than the gap itself.

HIGHLIGHT WHAT YOU'VE GAINED

Even if you weren't working



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in a traditional job, chances are you were still learning or growing. Volunteer work, online courses, freelance projects or caregiving responsibilities can all demonstrate valuable skills.

If you've done anything to stay current in your field —

like attending webinars, earning certifications or staying active in professional groups — be sure to mention that.

Employers appreciate candidates who use downtime productively and who are able to reflect on what they've learned.

FRAME THE STORY FOR THE JOB YOU WANT

A gap in employment doesn't define your career. What you say about it — and how you pivot to your current goals — makes all the difference.

Be ready to talk about what

you're looking for now and how your past experience (before and during the gap) supports your next step. When you stay clear and confident, hiring managers will take notice — not of the break, but of the value you bring next.