

Nothing Sugary in Back-To-Work Book

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The people behind PeopleFind Inc., an executive and career transition firm, have written a book aimed at the downsized, those declared redundant in mid- or late career.

Get Back to Work! A Non-Nonsense Guide for Finding Your Next Job Fast (Fitzhenry & Whiteside) is not heavy on touchy-feely consolations about your self-worth.

It cuts quickly to the chase with some down-to-earth advice ("Separate feelings from action. Naturally, there are many emotions swirling around you, such as disappointment, guilt and fear. However, it's important to keep those emotions at bay while you get on with the business of exploring your next opportunity").

In other words, get over it. Sure, they advise talking to a counsellor, but: "This is a side issue. Your immediate task is to accept your transition, regain control and make the most of this change in the fastest possible time."

Authors Charles Grossner, Leo Spindel and Harvey Glasaner, who boast of 50 years of combined experience in business, get down to the basics. One of the worthier chapters, Your clothing is your packaging, has an old-fashioned tone, ("Always opt for a more conservative image. Clean, well-pressed clothes make a difference and so do shined shoes.") but truer words were probably never written.

"Business women do well with dark suits and blouses," they say, "Avoid cleavage, miniskirts, flashy jewelry and loads of accessories." In other words, in the world of business, dress as though you mean business.

Don't get them wrong, though; they are firmly rooted in the 21st century when it comes to employee rights. A section on illegal questions that you cannot be asked in an interview makes that clear.

If a potential employer asks if you're married, whether you have children or how old you are, they've stepped out of bounds. "These personal matters may have little or no bearing on your job."

The authors also have no problem with you using such modern innovations as a career coach. Their point is, as the title says, "Get back to work," whatever it takes.

For anyone in their target audience who is feeling a little too crowded by sympathetic supporters and just wants some clear pointers, this book is worth a look.

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