

We all need to improve our mental energy so we're more positive in our attitude, enthusiastic in our voice, and energetic in our body language. This is particularly true during a job search where enthusiasm, physical energy, and optimism will inevitably ebb at times during that process.

One key way to heighten mental energy, which lasts a lot longer than a 5 Hour Energy drink, is by "giving." While there are many forms of giving, one way yields a triple benefit --- community involvement.

Most of us are involved with a community organization at some level. Giving money to a community group (church, nonprofit, neighborhood association, charity event, etc.) is great for them but it won't give you some key benefits to improve your mental energy. However, giving your time will dramatically improve mental energy in 3 ways....

- 1** First, by spending time with the community group's members, you'll learn more about the organization's purpose, people, and customers. While learning in general helps spark mental energy, combining learning with a community cause is more potent --- potentially adding more meaning in your life. This can boost mental energy for a longer period of time.
- 2** Second, when you give money to an organization but don't get involved with its people, you'll usually only get a letter thanking you for the contribution. However, when you actively participate in the organization, the positive feedback you receive dramatically multiplies from working with other volunteers and staff. Plus, you'll see the appreciation in peoples' faces, not just read it or hear it on the phone, and this will positively impact you more.
- 3** Third, by meeting people in the community organization, your network will expand in a better way. People in this network will connect to you on an emotional level because you're all working for a cause which everyone is passionate about. An emotionally connected network is the most powerful kind. Think of that 4th grade friend who you are still connected to although you share little in common in terms of work life, economic status, geography, or current friend groups. An emotionally networked group is more willing to help each other and the help is usually more substantive. This could be huge when you need assistance in a job transition, ideas for improving your business, social access to other groups, and information on other community events. Additionally, if you're trying to make a major change in your life, you can achieve far greater results through a network that inspires and supports you emotionally. This is the primary reason Alcoholics Anonymous and Weight Watchers have been so successful in changing people.

In the sports world, the best players have the best Expenditure / Recovery Ratio. Energy expenditure should equal energy renewal. As more mental energy is expended, like in a job search, more energy renewal is needed. Community involvement is one important way to not just recover mental energy but to lift it higher than normal and then sustain it.