

dipping your toes

BACK INTO THE CAREER POOL

Getting back into work after a break can be a daunting task, **Kerina Alter** explores the reasons why returning back to work can be difficult for some Mum's and provides a plan of action for reinterring the workforce.

I often hear from Mum's who are anxious at the thought of returning to work. Their reasons are many and varied but generally include:

"my skills are out of date"

"my position/company or work contacts have moved on"

"my interests lie elsewhere"

"my old job is not flexible"

"my co-workers won't treat me the same"

"my level of motivation is low"

"my guilt level is high"

DO ANY OF THESE SOUND FAMILIAR?

Here's some good news – an action plan can help! Taking a break should not mean being out of touch.

Start planning for returning to work as early as possible, even before your break starts and know that professional help is at hand. Developing an action plan can be a great way of knowing what to

do and keeping you on track for returning to your career.

Attempt to include some of the following into your action plan:

#1 Update your resume and online profiles at your earliest opportunity, this will remind you of your skills and boost your confidence in your abilities

#2 Stay in touch with your employer and work contacts, attend events, send and receive work and industry emails and if possible obtain work from home access

#3 Explore flexible work options, for example job sharing, working from home, changing hours, switching tasks or areas of responsibility

#4 Continue with professional development and keep across opportunities for learning

#5 Be aware of external events that might impact on your line of work

#6 Update your work wardrobe

#7 Discuss and plan your return to work ideas with your support network

#8 Research and confirm your child care options

#9 Be organised at home – shopping, cooking, cleaning

#10 Understand what quality time with your kids, family and friends means to you and plan to make it happen

#11 Know how to negotiate what you want from your employer, for example would a gradual transition back to work be helpful?

#12 Know your company's policies for flexible work and other examples or precedents within your company and other work situations

Mums who choose to switch into stand by mode, not off mode when taking a break find the transition back to work much easier. Stay tuned not tuned out!

For further career tips and advice, visit Kerina's website www.alteredcareer.com.au