



## Randy's Work *and You*

April Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

I ran across an article entitled "The Outsourcing Myth" in the April '05 edition of Wired Magazine.

American firms earn more money from foreign firms outsourcing service jobs here than they lose from domestic companies sending service jobs overseas. US businesses took in \$61.4 billion by "insourcing" (providing labor to foreign interests) in 2003, the most recent year that data is available. That same year they outsourced far less: \$43.5 billion worth of jobs. "The rest of the world out sources more to the US than the other way around," says Shang-Jin Wei, head economist of the International Monetary Funds' trade unit. "Which means, if every country in the world decides to cut down on service outsourcing, the US would lose the most."

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Upcoming Events:

**Networking Class:** April 19 and 26 from 7:00 to 9:00. The sponsoring organization is Tamalpais District Community Education. The place is Redwood High School, Larkspur, Marin County.

**Interviewing Class:** May 17 and May 24. The sponsoring organization is Tamalpais District Community Education. The place is Redwood High School, Larkspur, Marin County.  
For details, go to [www.marinlearn.com/](http://www.marinlearn.com/).

**This month's topics:**

1. **Second Interviews & First Interviews**
2. **Seven Habits of Highly Successful Job Seekers**
3. **Boomers' Corner: Your Next Chapter**
4. **Success Story**
5. **Humor Department**
6. **Words that Inspire**

### 1. **Second Interviews with Some, First Interviews with Others**

First and second interviews can be quite different. Interviewers meeting you for the second time have different expectations and they're more comfortable with you. They expect that you'll be more informed about their company and express targeted enthusiasm for the position.

The questions you ask second-time interviewers are focused on the company, industry trends, market drivers, key position deliverables, and competition. During your second visit, you'll meet new interviewers for the first time. These interviewers are really first time interviewers and they'll conduct the interview like a first-time time meeting. The difference is that they've heard good things about you and expect you to be a strong candidate, but they'll still have to be convinced. With first-time interviewers, conduct yourself like it's your first interview--because it is with these evaluators.

#### **Questions for 1st and 2nd Interviews**

*Michael R. Neece, CEO, Interview Mastery, [www.InterviewMastery.com](http://www.InterviewMastery.com)*

During the first interview, interviewer questioning focuses on the position and your qualifications. You ask questions about the key position requirements and present your experience.

Questions you ask during 1st interviews include:

- What are the key business reasons driving the need for this position?
- Describe the three top challenges that I'll face in this job?
- What has to happen for you to know you've hired the best person?
- What are the key deliverables that this position must achieve?
- What are the key metrics used to measure success?

Questions you ask during 2nd interviews include:

- Please describe three company initiatives and how the position is linked.
- What competitors do you feel present the strongest competition?
- What market dynamics do you feel will have the greatest impact?

As with all interviews, make sure you ask the two closing questions at the end of each meeting.

- What do you feel are my strengths for this position?
- What concerns do you have about my background?

### **Changing the Game**

Second interviews include meeting higher-level people in the company. Higher-level interviewers are more likely to be unskilled but they're more comfortable interviewing and asking unorthodox questions. Interviewer skill is not correlated to years of experience or level in the company.

As you progress through the hiring process you'll encounter different types of interviews. You may be asked to deliver a presentation. Panel interviews (multiple interviewers simultaneously), problem solving/simulation interviews, personality tests, and mealtime interviews are also common on second interviews.

### **Show Me the Money**

Finally, on second and third interviews you'll be questioned about your salary expectations and possible start date.

## **2. Seven Habits of Highly Successful Job Seekers**

*Linda Matias*

In the job search craze, there are those who land a job right away and those who struggle through the process of finding one for a long time. 'Luck' is usually the response one hears from disenfranchised job seekers when they find out that their neighbor down the street was offered a position after only a two-week search. With many job seekers vying for only a few open positions, the truth is that 'luck' rarely has anything to do with it.

Realizing that their job search campaign doesn't have to be a never-ending struggle, successful job seekers approach the process with patience and persistence. If you want to be among the highly successful job seekers follow the seven steps outlined below.

### **1. Search with purpose**

Instead of trying to fit into a mold set by a hiring organization, target companies that match your goals and career values; doing this will allow you to focus your energy into searching for a position that is a natural fit.

After all, you don't want to find yourself embarking on another search within a year's time because you made a decision in haste.

### **2. Always be prepared**

Be ready for your day's activities by 9 am. Opportunities rarely land on your lap and you have to be prepared for the surprises that may come up during the day. You don't want to be caught sleeping when someone calls to discuss an employment opportunity.

If you find yourself answering the phone like this: "hello? . . . well . . . um . . . well, like I was kinda sleeping. . . how long

is this gonna take? . . . who are you again? . . . like I, um, contacted so many places, cuz, you know, like, I can't like find a job . . ." then it is time to reprioritize your needs.

Waiting until your unemployment insurance is about to end before you begin aggressively looking for a position can be a costly mistake. You don't want to find yourself in a situation where you are running low on resources and desperation is about to set in. This is when mistakes are made and your job search may begin to suffer.

### **3. Develop a job search plan**

Organize your job search, map out a strategy, set priorities, and establish goals. Begin your search with a clear focus and a plan. Participate in a number of activities including answering classified ads, posting your resume on the Internet, and going on informational interviews.

### **4. Bypass Human Resources**

A human resources representative is also known as a "screener." The screener's job is to review resumes and match your experience with a checklist of requirements set forth by the hiring manager. If there are enough matches, the human resources representative forwards the resume to the decision maker.

Unfortunately, not much is left to the screener's interpretation. This is why most opportunities are lost--because the screener doesn't have the luxury of making a decision based on instinct; he or she is instructed to follow the lead of the hiring manager.

Since the decision makers (e.g., VP of Sales, Director of Marketing, or CEO) are the ones who determine who is ultimately hired, it is advisable that you apply directly to them.

### **5. Write follow-up letters**

Well-written follow up letters can make a difference as to whether you get hired. A follow-up letter is more than a simple note thanking the interviewer for his or her time. It should be a sophisticated letter that either re-affirms your interest in the position, serves as an opportunity to mention an important point you neglected to bring up, and/or provides an opportunity to offer new insight on a topic that was discussed during the interview.

### **6. Avoid toxic job seekers**

Job clubs are a great way to generate ideas and for networking purposes. However, some are also a breeding ground for negativity. These support groups can inadvertently affect your job search. Take inventory of the job seekers in attendance. Do they offer words of encouragement? Are they supportive of your efforts, or do they feed into your insecurities?

If after such meetings you feel emotionally drained and start to believe your chances of landing a job are bleak, then it's time to search for a new support team.

### **7. Be good to yourself**

There are two types of job seekers. One, that has a laid back approach, and the other that always feels "there aren't enough hours in the day" and compulsively searches for a job without taking a breather.

Following in the footsteps of the latter is the fastest way to reaching burn out and when careless mistakes are often made. Though your job search should be your primary activity, don't allow it to consume your every waking moment.

Every so often take a mini vacation; spend time with people who support you, listen to music and participate in activities you enjoy. Clearing your mind replenishes your energy and will allow you to continue searching for a job with a fresh outlook.

*Recognized as a career expert, Linda Matias brings a wealth of experience to the career services field. She has been sought out for her knowledge of the employment market, outplacement, job search strategies, interview preparation, and resume writing, quoted a number of times in The Wall Street Journal, New York Newsday, Newsweek, and HR-resource.com. She is President of CareerStrides and the National Resume Writers' Association. Visit her website at [www.careerstrides.com](http://www.careerstrides.com) or email her at [linda@careerstrides.com](mailto:linda@careerstrides.com).*

### 3. Boomers Corner: Your Next Chapter

#### **Mentoring and Baby Boomers**

*Judith Lindenberger, MBA, and Marian Stoltz-Loike, Ph.D.*

Today, in our love affair with what's new, what's cutting edge, and what's technologically cool, it's easy to forget that knowledge also comes with experience. It may require a few hours of e-training or a semester-long course to learn how an energy pump operates, but it takes years and years of experience to recognize the sounds of a pump that is not operating properly. The only way to shorten that learning cycle is to have someone with more experience help to accelerate learning.

Businesses idolize youth and technological savviness. Firms recruit new (and less expensive) talent in the belief that that's the way to build a competitive edge. But companies also recruit and retain mature employees because of respect for their knowledge. The best companies today will help their organizations transform the way they think about all of their employees. Each person brings different knowledge to the organization. Each generation brings something different and valuable to your organizational operations.

We've worked with business people across generations for many years, and whether you refer to their sharing of knowledge and information as love, passion, or, more traditionally, as mentoring, we've repeatedly tried to foster the powerful synergistic release of cross-generational sharing, learning, and performance.

This brings us to the topic of baby boomers as mentors. The youngest baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) have just turned 40 and the oldest baby boomers are in their late 50s. There are 76 million baby boomers and they represent a great deal of knowledge, talent, and experience.

Many baby boomers are looking for new ways to work--and are considering different business responsibilities, new opportunities, ways to give back to their organizations, or avenues for working with younger employees. Research has indicated that baby boomers like collaborative learning and working in teams. Mentoring provides a great opportunity to utilize baby boomers, but only when companies recognize that mentoring is a significant piece of a strategic plan to ramp up recruiting, retaining and increasing the knowledge and skills of talented employees.

Younger employees routinely tell us of their disenchantment with their companies as they describe the onerous demands (and opportunities) placed on them by managers who may have confidence in their abilities, but lack the time or skills to help them succeed. Faced with frustration and afraid that they will fail, many of these younger employees tell us that they are planning to move on and look for a more supportive business environment. In fact, the average 30-44 year old has had up to ten different positions.

Most businesses could use their more experienced baby boomers, who have deep knowledge, impressive networks, and broad-based business experience, to buffer younger employees against frustration, focus on their career paths, and find places to acquire the skills-based knowledge necessary to succeed.

To be effective, mentoring needs to be done strategically and creatively. Here are some benefits and guidelines from our experience.

#### ***Make mentoring a strategic business imperative.***

Studies show that there is a positive correlation between a positive mentoring experience and an increase in productivity, employee retention and job satisfaction. Effective mentoring, however, is a tremendous time commitment on the part of the employee and the mentor. It will not work unless the company strategically acknowledges the value of mentoring by adjusting the mentor's other business responsibilities. Modeling from the top also works well. If your head of operations at a particular location is a mentor, it sends a powerful message to employees about the value placed on mentoring, and also the focus on people as the most important part of your business.

One senior VP at a financial services firm regularly mentors five or six people... unless he feels that his skills set does not match the mentee's goals. Then he will recruit a more appropriate mentor for that individual. He sets stretch goals for his mentees and then provides them with tools and strategies to meet those goals. He often encourages them or selects them to present in front of senior management using their new skills.

#### ***Provide new perspectives.***

Encourage older workers to stop defining themselves in terms of their job titles and start reflecting on skills they have built and knowledge that they have amassed. Today, jobs are about more than just upward mobility. Mentors can share their vision and career histories so that younger employees understand what they can learn through lateral career moves and on the job experience.

**Share information.**

Mentoring can help boomers quickly learn about other levels within the organization. Says one mentor at a Fortune 1000 company, "As a leader, it has helped me to see the obstacles we inadvertently put in people's development." Mentoring can also help mature employees learn from and understand other generations. For instance, younger employees can help baby boomers with technical skills or provide marketing insights about a new generation of buyers.

**Build skills.**

Mature workers benefit from being mentors by having the chance to learn more about and practice listening and coaching--skills which require maturity, confidence and experience to fully employ.

**Reduce generational conflict.**

The most frequently reported generational conflicts are differing expectations regarding work hours, certain behaviors at work (e.g., use of cell phones), and acceptable dress. Another common issue is feeling that co-workers from other generations do not respect one another. Organizations can reduce generational friction with effective communication, team building, mentoring and recognizing the efforts of all workers.

**Enable knowledge transfer.**

As baby boomers retire, they take with them volumes of experience and information. Good working relationships between older and younger generations are critical in ensuring that this institutional knowledge is not lost as mature workers retire. The greater the mix of generations in an organization's workforce, the more important knowledge transfer becomes and the more powerful intergenerational synergy can be.

For example, younger employees often push back on managers, questioning the corporate rules and regulations. Typical questions may include, "Why do we have to come to work at 9 am?" or "If I come in late, why can't I make up the time?" Mentors can often manage, explain and process this information differently and at times more effectively than managers.

During the 1980s and 1990s many companies laid off significant numbers of employees. Now organizations are faced with large numbers of employees getting ready to retire and the need to onboard younger workers and quickly move them up to supervisory and managerial positions. Younger managers may come to their new positions with little or no business-related experience and have trouble building their own credibility and integrating and respecting the knowledge and talent of mature subordinates. Mentors can help these new managers develop business-related understanding and strategize about using the talents of more experienced employees.

In our experience, we have seen baby boomers who are reluctant to mentor younger employees because they are afraid that once they share their knowledge, they will become extraneous and lose their jobs. In fact, in today's fast-paced business environment, it is the SMEs (subject matter experts) who can capably and articulately share what they know who are the most valuable to their organizations. Here are some tips for encouraging baby boomers to pass on organizational knowledge.

**Reward, don't punish, mature employees for mentoring.**

To entice baby boomers to become mentors, organizations should reward and recognize them for their contributions. Talk up mentoring in meetings, in speeches, in newsletters, in performance appraisal discussions and include mentoring in corporate awards programs. And, most important, don't replace mature mentors with their mentees before they retire or mentors will quickly conclude that being a mentor is a very bad idea.

Ask mature employees about someone who enabled them to succeed. In one study of people who had experienced effective mentoring, half of them said the mentoring experience "changed my life." Those are powerful words. It is equally powerful to know that you were the person who changed someone else's life.

**Share mentoring results.**

Study after study in which mentors and mentees are asked how satisfied they are with the relationship report that the mentors are more satisfied. It just feels good to help someone else. Says one mentor, "It has been rewarding to be able to help people at critical stages of their career by helping them analyze where they are in their careers. Mentoring gets people in the right groove for long term career success."

**Encourage mentors to pass on their life lessons.**

A key component of domestic saving in the United States in future decades will be the personal saving rate. That rate will depend on a number of factors, especially the behavior of baby boomers. As a mentee commented, "My mentor has helped me think about the future and gave me advice like start saving for your retirement today. The two percent on the personal side is really powerful."

### ***Continue mentoring past retirement.***

The trait most attributed to baby boomers is the willingness to give maximum effort. Baby boomers are also rated as highly results-driven, very likely to retain what they learn; and low on their need for supervision. Many baby boomers plan to work at least part-time past the traditional retirement age. These characteristics show baby boomers to be eager workers who may be well suited to be brought back as consultants and mentors after their retirement.

Mentoring is a process that is compatible with baby boomers' values and work style. Mentoring involves being collegial, talking, sharing (not telling), and developing solutions together. It is also optimistic, which is typical of most baby boomers' outlook on the world. We've found that when generations work together in strategic, business-related activities such as mentoring, everyone benefits. The mentee builds new business knowledge, and the mentor often gets reenergized and reengaged in business opportunities. We find unique satisfaction in nurturing these synergistic relationships.

One last point. The business knowledge of 20-year-olds and that of 50-year-olds is profoundly different. The technology facility and ability to multi-task among 20-somethings is unparalleled and impressive. But the knowledge, experience, creativity, and business acumen of 50-somethings is also unparalleled and equally impressive in a very different way. Cross-generational mentoring provides one of the most significant ways for integrating these diverse abilities.

As author Studs Terkel, now more than 90 years old, said, "Think of what's stored in an 80- or a 90-year-old mind. Just marvel at it. You've got to get out this information, this knowledge, because you've got something to pass on. There'll be nobody like you ever again. Make the most of every molecule you've got as long as you've got a second to go."

*Judith Lindenberger is a two-time recipient of The Athena Award for Excellence in Mentoring and president of The Lindenberger Group, LLC. Contact her at 609.730.1049 or info@lindenbergergroup.com or read more at www.lindenbergergroup.com. Marian Stoltz-Loike, Ph.D., is the President of SeniorThinking. Contact her at Mstoltz-loike@seniorthinking.com or read more at www.seniorthinking.com.*

## **4. Success Story**

### ***Martin B.: mid Forties***

Martin got his MBA from UCLA in 1989 and went to work for Nestle USA in San Francisco in 1989. After successfully climbing the corporate ladder in marketing and branding, he joined the dot com world, shortly before the bust. As the primary bread winner for his family (two children), his main focus was to find a full-time, permanent job. He used all the conventional tools to find one (job boards, recruiters, ads, company websites, etc.) but became discouraged when he did not land a job.

Networking did not come easy for Martin. But, through practice and hard work, his networking started to pay off--his emphasis was on problem solving with organizations first and working out the "how" second (full time, part time or short term contract). Martin is now quite busy with several short-term contracts, which he knows could turn into full-time work.

## **5. Humor Department**

Oh my, resume bloopers! Actually found on resumes.

- Job description: "Soul IT support for total of 100 users."  
*Technician and spiritual advisor.*
- Additional skills: "I am a Notary Republic."  
*Do you have your own anthem?*
- Cover letter: "I feel my rigorous education and subsequent internship have prepared me for any obstical I might encounter."  
*Except the challenge of finding misspelled words.*
- Cover letter: "Please find my resume."  
*When did you lose it?*
- Application: Please state what you liked most about your last job: "The fast-paste environment."  
*Made it worth sticking around awhile?*

- Cover letter: "Was an unhappy, drifting bachelor until I met my lovely wife, Linda, whose work ethic and inspiring nature made me the responsible person I am today."  
*Can we interview her?*
- Cover letter: "Enclosed please find my resume. You mention in your ad that you require a writing sample. I send out at least 50 resumes a week, and writing samples are expensive."  
*We'll take that as a no, then.*
- Cover letter: "I am very interested in the account stuff position."  
*Unfortunately, we just filled that position.*
- Objective: "So one of the main things for me is, as the movie 'Jerry McGuire' puts it, 'Show me the money!'"  
*Yeah baby!*

## 6. Words that Inspire

"True life is lived when tiny changes occur."  
--Leo Tolstoy

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