



Randy's Work *and You*

December Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

The end of 2005 is in sight. Early hiring forecasts for 2006 are that it will be marginally better from a job search standpoint. We are at least not going backwards.

Should you bother to look for work during the holiday season?

Hiring does have a tendency to slow down during the holidays, but the opportunity to network becomes greater. And it is to your advantage to be in the minds of those in your network working on their budgets when 2006 begins.

Copies of all past E-zines are archived on my website. Feel free to pass this E-zine on.

To subscribe, click on <mailto:randy@randyblock.com>

To unsubscribe, hit the reply button and type REMOVE in the subject line.

Upcoming Events:

December 1 at 1:00 p.m.

I will be speaking to juniors and seniors at Menlo College as the guest of Professor Ron Buckhammer. The topic is "What A Graduate Needs To Know Before They Start Their job Search". Hiring trends and "hot jobs for graduates" will also be discussed.

Four Tuesdays, starting 1/10/2006, 7:00 PM - 9:00 p.m.

In Larkspur, CA. I will be giving a workshop titled: "**A New Kind of Retirement**". Were you born between 1946 and 1964? What has changed? Nearly everything! Seeing a new kind of retirement is the first step in developing a plan that encapsulates the best part of the past with a new future! We will discuss transition into meaningful life/work arrangements as you reorganize your later years around core values and life challenges.

For details, go to <http://www.marinlearn.com/>.

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This month's topics:

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1. Fear of Interviewing

By Carole Martin

Your heart is beating faster than usual, your hands feel clammy, your mouth is so dry it feels like you have cotton inside – and you're supposed to feel confident. Are you going to an interview or a torture session? The answer is – "it's all in your perspective."

Ideally you would sit poised thumbing through a magazine, feeling relaxed as you wait your turn to have a conversation with the interviewer for the company. Think about it - what do you have to lose here? What's the worst thing that can happen? What if you don't get this job - is the world going to stop turning? I realize of course, that bills must be paid, but you are taking the wrong approach if you are going to come across as desperate – "Please, please, hire me." Interviewers smell fear.

A change in thinking

The first, and most important step is to change the way that you view the interview. This is not an appointment with the dentist who may inflict pain. It is a conversation with another person. What is the worst thing that can happen as a result of the interview? You won't get the job, which may not have been the right job for you anyway.

Secondly, this is a conversation - a two-way process. You will be interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you. Is there a good fit here – both ways? What looks good on paper may not be what it appears – for either party. It will be part of your job during the interview to investigate whether this a good place for you, and whether you want to invest a significant part of your life here. When you are not checking them out and what they have to offer you are missing an opportunity that you may regret later.

Calming techniques

One of the best techniques to handle stress is through breathing. Take deliberate, shallow breaths. Take air in through the nostrils and exhale quietly through your mouth. This is a technique that should be practiced as a relaxation technique before the interview so that your body gets used to slowing down the breathing process and relaxing.

Relaxation techniques such as yoga, and meditation classes, are recommended for anyone who has an extreme case of "interview fright." The interview can cause panic attacks if the fear is strong enough. Pre-conditioning will do wonders for this type of anxiety.

Preparation before the interview

These are competitive times and you should steel yourself to expect some rejection. Think about it this way, "Did you get a marriage proposal after every date?" Well, you probably aren't going to get a job offer after every interview.

For every job you apply for there are more than likely three to four equally qualified candidates in line for the same job. Whether you stand out from "the crowd" will depend on your preparation and ability to show confidence in yourself – believing that you are the "best candidate for this job." How can you possibly sell anyone anything if you don't believe in it yourself?

Preparation will make you feel more confident and less anxious. Can you imagine giving a performance without some practice and preparation? "Winging" the interview in today's market is a big mistake.

Fear of Rejection

You may have had a number of interviews with no offer. You may be feeling defeated, and it's beginning to affect your-self esteem.

This would be true of anyone. But it is a mistake to take it personally. There are so many factors that could be affecting the offer that it is impossible to say what is happening. There may be internal candidates, relatives promised jobs, a competitor who is a perfect match for the job, a lack of chemistry between you and the new boss, a mismatch in salary needs, etc., etc.

Let it go

Give yourself credit for getting an interview – only a small percentage of people get this far in the process. Give yourself credit for going out there and putting yourself on the line, even though it is painful for you. Give yourself permission to not get job offers. Believe that an offer will come through when it is the right offer – the right fit for the company and for you. Take the control back and reject the feeling of fear.

When you have done everything to prepare for the interview, and you are satisfied that you can present yourself in the best light possible, the next step is for you to let it go. You can learn something from each interview. Learn to enjoy meeting new people and having new experiences. Who knows you may even grow to like interviewing.

Carole Martin is a celebrated author, trainer, and an interview coach. Her books, "Interview Fitness Training Workbook" and "Boost Your Interview IQ" (McGraw Hill) have sold thousands of copies worldwide. Receive Carole's FREE 9-week job interview e-course by visiting her web site at: www.interviewcoach.com

<<http://www.interviewcoach.com/>> or www.interviewfitnesstraining.com

<<http://www.interviewfitnesstraining.com/>>

2. Finding Time: Blending Networking Into Your Life

By Perri Capell

If you're doing it right, networking isn't something that takes lots of extra time in your life.

It easily blends into your life, and your approach to life.

You may think of networking -- making new contacts and spreading the word about yourself or your company -- as slogging to trade shows or meet-and-greet cocktail parties to shake hands and exchange business cards.

But tending to your career doesn't require spending long days in hotel ballrooms or long nights in smoke-filled bars. *If you see everyone as a potential contact*, you can network during any mundane daily activity, from waiting in line for a latte to peddling at the gym to commuting.

Some conversations will be fleeting, while other times, the people you meet will become part of your circle.

Being open to -- and staying in touch with -- those who cross your path is how you make your own luck. At some point, you'll learn about something that can benefit you professionally before the rest of the world finds out.

"People think of networking as going to a function," says Karen Susman, a Denver-based coach and speaker on networking. "You need to realize you are building your network everywhere all the time."

While working as an executive recruiter in Austin, Texas, Becky Gates joined a book club. A referral from someone in the club led her to a job as senior development director for the Girl Scouts Lone Star Council.

"I told her I was interested in working for a nonprofit because I liked what I was doing as a volunteer," says Ms. Gates, 55 years old. "She said she knew the CEO of the girl scouts' council. She introduced us, and I found out they needed someone."

Five months ago, Ms. Gates moved to Boise, Idaho, where she's vice president and general manager for Organizational Consultants to Management, a Salt Lake City-based career transitions firm. Ms. Gates and her husband relocated to Boise to be closer to family. She learned of the opening before the move through another networking contact.

Some traditional networking tactics do take time, but shouldn't take much. Busy executives who excel at career management say they set aside only a few extra minutes a day -- but at least a few minutes a day -- to touch base with professional contacts.

Tim Ayers, director of global services marketing for Tellabs, a communications company in Naperville, Ill., devotes about five minutes daily to call or email some of the approximately 900 people in his computerized database. They include colleagues, vendors and others he's worked with in the past.

He squeezes in the calls or emails first thing in the morning, which he says is best for talking to people overseas, or between meetings, or makes them from home in the evenings. "My schedule may have no more than a few open blocks and even then, people might be queued up waiting to talk with me," he says, "but I just make the time."

Mr. Ayers notes the benefits: When he lost his job in Chicago during the telecommunications meltdown in 2002, he found a new position through a networking contact. Talking with others regularly also helps him do his job better because it keeps him informed about trends and potential candidates for Tellabs openings, he says.

If you aren't making the time to network, ask yourself: Are you really so busy that you can't spare five minutes on something that's so beneficial?

Perhaps it's not just lack of time that's holding you back, but lack of confidence. It's unnerving to make calls when you doubt the person you're about to contact wants to hear from you. But when that nice email comes back, the anxiety melts away. Take some time and try it.

3. Boomer Corner 2046: A boomer odyssey

By Marco R. Della Cava, USA TODAY

For most busy denizens of the early 21st century, contemplating the future means figuring out tomorrow's dinner.

But take a moment to journey forward to 2046, when 79 million baby boomers will be 82 to 100 years old.

Thanks to lifestyle habits and medical advances, they probably will be the healthiest group of elderly in history. Thanks to extended employment spans, they will be the wealthiest. Thanks to their huge voting bloc, they will be the most powerful.

So just what kind of America this crowd of geriatric goliaths will forge? Talk to folks whose job it is to think decades down the road and two disparate visions emerge: one inspirational and the other downright creepy. Using the revered boomer medium of film as a guide, the first story line offers a *Cocoon*-like world in which benevolent oldsters imbued with youth improve society by spreading their wisdom and wealth. The other scenario plays out more like *Planet of the Apes*, in which an impoverished underclass is unable to make its mark on a world ruled by domineering elders.

How will things play out? The script for *2046: A Boomer Odyssey* is still in our hands.

"Right now we're facing a future in which this group either serves its own interests at the expense of the

young, or it helps lead a multigenerational society in which they're exemplars of enlightenment," says Ken Dychtwald, president of Age Wave, a San Francisco-based firm that helps companies prepare for the coming gray reign. "Boomers still have the chance to be a contributory group, to give more than they take." That's a noble goal. But when it comes to taking — also defined as consuming — boomers are Zen masters. Setting aside for a moment the philosophical questions that will define Boomerworld, much of the cultural landscape in 2046 will be shaped by the enduring spending power of folks who added "shopaholic" to society's addiction lexicon.

Food, houses, watches, shoes, electronics, entertainment, you name it. As boomer tastes go, so goes the marketplace. Interviews with futurists, marketers and designers offer a provocative picture of Future Street, USA, where we just might find that:

- Most homes are single-story with interiors that feature so-called transgenerational design touches, such as levers and latches manipulated by the entire hand and not arthritic fingers, custom-height countertops and wider hallways and doors for wheelchairs.
- Movie theaters virtually have disappeared as Internet-bred boomers browse through a tidal wave of age-appropriate Hollywood fare from the comfort of their posture-preserving couches.
- Crosswalk lights stay green longer to allow this elderly army to safely reach sidewalks, and ads that showcase the hip octogenarian feature large typefaces and colors that acknowledge the aging eye's inability to distinguish between hues such as pink and yellow.

The change is already here

It's not so much that providers of goods and services will ignore the young; it's that the older crowd won't be. "The demand from this large group of aging boomers will force products of all kinds to be designed without penalty to any age group," says James Pirkl, director of Transgenerational Design Matters, an Albuquerque-based non-profit that offers guidance on designing for the elderly. "In 2050, there will be 9 million people over 85, or triple what we have now. So society's focus will definitely change."

Some of these ageist shifts already have begun.

The Recreation Vehicle Industry Association says members are keeping tomorrow's on-the-go boomers front and center as they design RVs that increasingly resemble movable homes. "Boomers are fanatical about their lifestyle, which is defined by freedom and flexibility almost regardless of any energy crisis," says association President David Humphreys, who is confident that the need to stay mobile will trump rising gas costs.

Today, upscale RVs run from \$100,000 to \$700,000; the high-end vehicles feature upscale furnishings and full Internet connectivity, a must for a group that likes staying in touch while being on the move in luxury.

"Boomers may well make these RVs their permanent homes," Humphreys says.

At Boeing, engineers working on the company's 787 Dreamliner, which is due in 2008, have been acting like old folks so that the plane's interior fits boomers.

"We had them try and function in a Third Age Suit, which when you put it on reduces the flex in your knees, back, elbow and neck," says payloads engineer Vicki Curtis, referring to a movement-restricting costume the airplane manufacturer borrowed from Ford Motor. "You can't even move your knuckles."

The result: Expect more legroom, ergonomic seating and air systems that improve breathing.

But while "There will be many older folks using this 787, we don't want it to look or feel like a nursing home," Curtis says. "The older folks of tomorrow just won't act like the ones who preceded them."

Older but 'thinking younger'

As the architects of today's youth-obsessed culture, boomers proudly flaunt their Dorian Gray complex.

When they look in the mirror, the years melt away both figuratively (it's hard to feel old if you're doing senior triathlons) and literally (between Botox and plastic surgery, it has never been easier to defy Mother Nature).

"Right now, 50 is the new 35, and that sort of thinking will just continue with this crowd," says Marshal Cohen, chief analyst at NPD Group of Port Washington, N.Y., a firm that studies consumer behavior.

"Boomers are getting older, but they're actually thinking younger."

Marketers increasingly will cater to this group, Cohen says. Already The Gap has launched Forth & Towne, aimed at women over 35. The move comes in response to the success of Chico's, women's stores that size clothes with a varied population in mind.

Such specialized retail shops will proliferate and creep north in target age. "Right now, very few stores in malls are aimed at people over 65, but they'll soon represent about 20% of all stores," Cohen says. "Instead of going after the youth market, many manufacturers will grow with their customers. That is a huge change, away from the young and toward the old."

Well, now. Could it be that age might soon trump beauty?

Might the future Paris Hiltons of the world be forced to staff hotel front desks for their allowance as a grandparent-dominated society finds her antics uninteresting? Would 2046's sexiest man alive be an elegantly wrinkled George Clooney (85 on May 6), Hollywood's diva be grandma Eva Longoria (71 on March 15) and that year's president be Yoda-like tech guru Bill Gates (91 on Oct. 28)?

"Marketers, politicians, entertainment moguls — they are all very awake to the shift that's coming," says Peter Sealey, former marketing chief at Columbia Pictures and co-author of *Not on My Watch: Hollywood vs. the Future*.

"Think back to the 15th century, when eyeglasses first appeared. That invention literally added 20 years to a person's life in terms of being able to function and be productive," Sealey says. "Well, we're going to see the same sort of enhancements going on this time around, a collection of devices that will make 95 look like 65." Sixty-five. That signpost for retirement will be another casualty of the boomer era. Otto von Bismarck picked the age at which folks could dip into a social insurance program in the late 1800s, when many folks were dead by 65. In a 2046 brimming with medical breakthroughs, you might get takers if the retirement age were 95.

"Expect to see more ads featuring old boomers at work, because compared to the generation that went before them, these people will just not retire," says Peter Francese, demographic trends analyst for ad agency Ogilvy & Mather. "They're college educated, and they can continue to make a good living well past retirement age."

Age Wave's Dychtwald, whose latest book is *The Power Years: A User's Guide to the Rest of Your Life*, says boomers will see their golden years "as a playground of new beginnings. People will break away from the gravitational pull of aging. You might see 70-year-olds on campus with 18-year-olds. In my day, old people looked old. Not so now, and less so in the future."

What's more, looks are bankable.

"During the dot-com boom, we rewarded youth and suffered for it. (We now see) it's criminal to discard the experience of the old and that retirement is a big loss to society," says journalist Julie Winokur, who, along with her photographer husband, Ed Kashi, created the book and online documentary *Aging in America: The Years Ahead*.

"Back in the '70s, there was a true generation gap between the old and young," Winokur says. "But our work reveals that this time around, there is no gap, just a fluid transition between the ages."

Indeed, another part of the one-big-happy-family vision is the promise of bonding between bookend generations. "It can be a world where grandparents care about their children and grandchildren, and back up the chain," says Bill Novelli, CEO of AARP.

Novelli concedes it will take some societal reengineering to accomplish that, from restoring city centers (boomers will trade homes in the suburbs for the convenience and culture of urban life) to revamping the nation's health care system. ("If the costs continue to rise, we could well spend half our country's gross national product on health care, and that won't work".)

But overall, he is optimistic. "Just like the nation coped with all the babies born after World War II, America will grow older successfully," he says. "I don't see intergenerational warfare."

But others do.

"It will cost money to stay healthy and good-looking," says Konrad Kressley, professor emeritus at the University of South Alabama who specializes in future studies. "So you are likely to have wealthy, older Anglos on one end of the spectrum and working-class, largely minorities on the other. Many scholars think a war between these groups could break out, a political war pitting privileged elders against the immigrant young."

There are ways to diffuse this "social dynamite," says Paul Saffo, director of the think tank Institute for the Future. His suggestions include a "life tax" requiring boomers to pay for the privilege of sticking around, taking some of the tax burden off the young.

Golden years in Goa, India?

Some boomers might simply leave the country, making room for the next generation to blossom, Saffo says. It would be a generational "cleansing" that, in the old days, was handled by an early death.

"I'm waiting for the first retirement cities to pop up in places like Goa, India," he says. "The weather's great, people speak English, and it's cheap. What more do you want?"

In fact, some boomers may want to take that advice one step farther — into outer space. By 2046, if boomer airline tycoon Richard Branson has his way, there could well be ways to live out that *Cocoon*-like fantasy and head for another corner of the cosmos.

That would be so boomer. Big, brash and bold. After all, this is the intrepid generation that fought for civil rights, demanded an end to the Vietnam War, booted a president and revolutionized communications. Earth might not be enough for this crowd.

In his 2001 science-fiction novel *Borrowed Tides*, Paul Levinson sends two 80-year-olds on a mission to Alpha Centauri, based on the book's premise that people with active intellectual lives are the ones who live longest.

"Hey, that well could happen in real life down the road a few decades," says Levinson, who teaches communications at Fordham University. "And when they go, you can be sure these old folks will be blasting The Beatles or the Stones on their trip. Let's face it, boomers have dominated the culture so far, and they're likely to keep on doin'."

4. Success Story

How long should job hunters search before admitting they won't find the kind of work they want any time soon? In Amy Oberg's case, at least two years. She looked a bit longer than that before redirecting her path. Ms. Oberg was building a career in corporate competitive intelligence when she suffered back-to-back job losses. But not just any job losses. She was a manager of competitive intelligence for Enron Corp. until the Houston energy giant became embroiled in an accounting scandal and laid off thousands in late 2001.

Ms. Oberg's next position, a contract competitive-intelligence role for Dynegy Inc., lasted about nine months. The concern laid off many staffers after settling a federal accounting probe.

Job-hunting in Houston in mid-2002 was no fun. "There were literally thousands of 'me' walking up and down the streets who were from Enron, [Arthur] Andersen and Dynegy," recalls Ms. Oberg, alluding to Enron's former auditors.

She soon moved to Boston. Recession-battered companies were still slashing costs. Her Enron experience didn't help.

"People were interested in talking with me because they wanted to find out the inside skinny on Enron," Ms. Oberg says. "But there was a real cloud over that name. I had to be really sure that people were aware that I wasn't party to any of the stuff that (had been) going on there."

Ms. Oberg networked like crazy, joining groups such as Wind (which stands for "Wednesday is Networking Day"). She called everyone she knew from as far back as high school. She had about 150 informational meetings in Boston between fall 2002 and fall 2004.

Ms. Oberg even sent her resume to a Boston radio station with a weekly program about a local job seeker. The station interviewed her on air about her background and search. No nibbles.

By last fall, Ms. Oberg had interviewed for only six openings without receiving any offers. Her optimism was fading. "It was difficult to figure out what I was doing wrong and rectify it," she says. She finally decided to give up on pursuing a competitive-intelligence position. "It just wasn't going to work," she explains.

Unsure of her direction, Ms. Oberg began perusing Web sites for jobs, including craigslist.com. The free classified-ad site offers postings about hundreds of subjects organized by U.S. city. In December, she noticed that Gemini Advisors LLC was seeking an associate. The Concord, Mass., financial-advisory and investment-management firm had been launched in May 2004 to advise individuals and corporate clients about tax and investment issues.

The boutique needed someone who could manage its office while training to be a financial analyst and ultimately an adviser to clients, according to David Matias, a managing partner. About 10 of the 46 people responding to the ad were qualified, he says. The firm hired Ms. Oberg as its third employee because of her strong educational background, poised personality and self-motivation, he remembers. "She's very good on her feet."

Ms. Oberg, now 48 years old, feels she stumbled on an ideal career field. Analyzing companies for investment purposes isn't much different from analyzing them for strategic reasons, she says. She must be licensed before she can begin advising clients -- and resume making the kind of money she earned before. But she believes the investment field offers good career prospects.

As for her two-year job search, "the most valuable lesson I learned was recognizing when to change course," she says. "That's a really hard thing to know, and it requires a lot of soul searching."

5. Humor Department: *Sleeping on the Job*

Things To Say If You Get Caught Sleeping At Your Desk

15. "They told me at the blood bank this might happen."

14. "This is just a 15 minute power-nap like they raved about in the last time management course you sent me to."

13. "Whew! Guess I left the top off the liquid paper"

12. "I wasn't sleeping! I was meditating on the mission statement and envisioning a new paradigm!"

11. "This is one of the seven habits of highly effective people!"

10. "I was testing the keyboard for drool resistance"

9. "Actually I'm doing a "Stress Level Elimination Exercise Plan" (SLEEP) I learned it at the last mandatory

seminar you made me attend.

8. "I was doing a highly specific Yoga exercise to relieve work related stress."
7. "Darn! Why did you interrupt me? I had almost figured out a solution to our biggest problem."
6. "The coffee machine is broken...."
5. "Someone must've put decaf in the wrong pot."
4. "Boy that cold medicine I took last night just won't wear off!"
3. "Ah, the unique and unpredictable circadian rhythms of the workaholic!"
2. "I wasn't sleeping, I was trying to pick up contact lens without hands."

AND THE #1 BEST THING TO SAY IF YOU GET CAUGHT SLEEPING AT YOUR DESK:

"Amen"

6. Words that Inspire

*"Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity—and
I'm not sure about the former. "*

Albert Einstein
Physicist

Your comments and feedback on this E-zine are welcome!

To unsubscribe from this monthly newsletter, hit the reply button and type REMOVE in the subject line.

Happy holidays to all!!

Sincerely,

--

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