

Dear clients and colleagues,

One month down already with eleven to go in 2005. We will see a lot more short-term contracts turning into permanent positions this year. Translation? Don't limit yourself to looking only for full-time employment. That contract may turn into full time.

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

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Upcoming Events:

Interviewing Webinar: February 9 and 10 at 10:00 a.m. (PST). We all know that the most qualified person doesn't not always get the offer after an interview. Typically, it's the candidate who interviews the best. In this two-part webinar, learn some tips and strategies, which will help you maximize the interview.

For details, go to www.sixfigurejobs.com.

Interviewing Class: February 8 and 15 from 7:00 to 9:00. The sponsoring organization is Tam District Community Education. The place is Redwood High School, Larkspur, Marin County.

For details, go to www.marinlearn.com/.

This month's topics:

- 1. One-Week Job-Search: How to Lay the Foundation for a New Job in Just Seven Days**
- 2. Getting Beyond the Screener and Into the Interview**
- 3. Boomers' Corner: Your Next Chapter**
- 4. Success Story**
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1. One Week Job Search: How to lay the Foundation for a New Job in Just Seven Days.

Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

One of the hardest parts of job hunting is often putting in enough effort to get the results you seek. You may respond to a few job ads, perhaps talk with a couple of people in your network, and possibly post your resume on a few job boards... but then you wait and nothing really happens.

If you are serious about finding a new job, then you need to put more time and dedication into the process—and one way to accomplish this feat is to set aside a week to focus solely on your job search. This process involves starting each day with a set of goals to

accomplish—and then spending the day doing your best to achieve them.

By following the guidelines in this article, you should be well on your way to laying the foundation for a new job.

Day 1 of Your Job Search

Your goal for this day is to establish your job search goals and to get organized. These two activities are essential to job hunting success.

The ideal goal is one or more solid job leads by the end of the week, but you may have some other goals too, such as expanding your network of contacts and researching further educational or training opportunities.

Organization is essential. You can too easily waste time the entire week if you don't step up the planning and organizing. Consider setting up some spreadsheets or logs—for your network, for job leads, and for other aspects of your job search.

Day 2 of Your Job Search

Your goal for this day is to make an inventory of your accomplishments, develop your unique selling proposition (USP), and analyze your network of contacts.

Before you can even begin to analyze your resume or work on your interviewing skills, you have to spend the time describing and categorizing accomplishments from all your relevant work experiences—including school projects if you are a new grad. Review all your past experiences and brainstorm the impact you made—how you performed the job differently than anyone else and what results you achieved. Whenever possible, try to quantify those accomplishments.

Once you've identified all your accomplishments, you can start on your (USP). Your USP is the thing that makes you different—better—than all the other job seekers. Your USP sets you apart. You'll want to craft your USP into about a 10- to 15-word statement that you can use on your career marketing documents as well as in interviews. Some experts also refer to this statement as your elevator pitch.

The final part of your day should be analyzing and mapping your network of contacts. Your network is the people with whom you have a relationship—family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, mentors, former bosses. And your network actually can extend to the networks of all the people you know. Your goal is to organize and prioritize your list of network contacts so that you'll be prepared to contact the people who will most likely have access to—or knowledge of—job openings in your field.

Day 3 of Your Job-Search

Your goal for this day is to perfect your career marketing documents and spend more time on networking.

Now that you have identified your accomplishments, you can write a new resume or revise

your existing resume. Actually, what you'll be doing is perfecting your resume foundation--because with each job opportunity, you'll want to modify your resume to reflect the specific requirements of the job as well as use some of the words and phrases the prospective employer uses to describe the position. There simply is no such thing as one-resume-fits-all anymore.

Finally, if you have any concerns about your resume--your most important job-hunting document--consider having it critiqued by a resume professional

The other important career-marketing document is your cover letter. While the goal of your resume is to obtain an interview, the goal of your cover letter is simply to get your resume read. Your cover letter must be dynamic and concise. Your goal should be to develop a solid cover letter core that you will modify for each opportunity.

An oft-neglected marketing document is your list of references. Take the time now to review who you currently have listed, brainstorm some other possibilities, and most importantly, contact each person you have listed--or want to list--and be sure they are willing to be listed as a reference for you. Remember that you do not have to list former bosses as references; use people who know your work and will speak highly of it--and of you.

The last part of your day should be spent on networking. First, send your newly revised resume to your key network members. Do not ask for a job, but ask for their help in identifying possible job opportunities. You should also look into ways to add new members to your network.

Day 4 of Your Job-Search

Your goal for this day is to exhaust all possible avenues for job leads.

First, follow-up with your network about any possible job opportunities because these leads will have the most likelihood for success.

Second, develop a list of prospective employers in your target area--and then conduct an in-depth research campaign to learn more about each one, obtaining the name and contact information of the hiring manager for your area of expertise. Remember to check each organization's job postings to see if there are any openings that match your qualifications.

Third, research and contact recruiters and temporary agencies that place job seekers with your expertise.

Fourth, talk with the career services and alumni offices at your previous (or current) educational institutions and obtain possible networking and job leads.

Fifth, search some of the online job boards for possible leads. Don't just search the major boards; consider geographic-specific or industry/profession niche boards.

Sixth, consider conducting some informational interviews. This networking tool often leads to the discovery of other job opportunities--as well as strengthening/broadening your knowledge of a particular industry/profession and expanding your network.

Send--or deliver--cover letter and resume packets to the hiring manager for each of the leads you uncover.

Day 5 of Your Job-Search

Your goal for this day is to prepare for job interviews and follow-up on job leads.

The best way to secure a job offer is to perform strongly in job interviews, and the best way to perform strongly in job interviews is through preparation. The most basic preparation you can do is to review a list of typical job interview questions.

The next level of preparation is to uncover the types of interviews or interview questions that are most likely for your industry/profession. The deepest level of preparation is to actually write your answers to expected interview questions. There's considerable research that shows that this type of preparation helps you better retain the answers, thus helping you perform better in the actual interview. Just remember not to memorize your answers.

Finally, remember to format your answers to interview questions as short stories--illustrative anecdotes--that focus on your actions, accomplishments, and learning experiences.

And as the day progresses, remember to continue to track down and follow-up all job leads. Schedule interviews.

Day 6 of Your Job-Search

Your goal for this day is to continue following-up all job leads as well as pursue further career development.

Continue to work the phones, emails, and hit the pavement in your quest to uncover and follow-up on all job leads.

While you are waiting for the results of all your efforts, you may want to consider strengthening your interviewing preparation by developing a career portfolio. Your career portfolio contains an archive of job-search materials that help document your qualifications... your accomplishments. Portfolios often contain samples of your work, letters of accommodation/recommendation, awards and honors you've received, client testimonials, professional development, and much more.

Day 7 of Your Job-Search

Your goal for this day is to continue following-up all job leads, scheduling interviews, and considering other options to take.

Your persistence in tracking down job leads will pay off greatly, so keep at it.

You should now have several hot prospects on your radar.

However, if, at the end of the day, the end of the week, you have gotten little or no interest from all your hard work, you may want to consider working with a career professional to review all aspects of your job-search campaign. Sometimes an outsider can see--and help you fix--some minor issues that are holding you back from achieving your goals.

Finally, remember to keep your network in the loop--and send thank-you notes to everyone who helped you in your job search.

Final Thoughts

The one-week job-search lays the foundation for a successful job-hunt, but you may not see the results of all your hard work for weeks or months after this intensive seven-day effort. You may get lucky and be in the right place at the right time, but if your one-week efforts do not lead to any solid job leads, the best advice is to keep at it. The average job-search takes months, so don't get discouraged--just keep following-up all job leads and keep uncovering new ones.

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2. Getting Beyond the Screener and Into the Interview

I had an interesting conversation a while back with a hiring manager who made a comment about the surprising number of resumes she gets from people seemingly overqualified or from unrelated industries. Most of the resumes she tosses aside with disinterest.

I share her comments in case you fit the profile of candidate she mentioned. If so, there are steps to take to make certain your resume is seriously considered when applying for positions outside your industry or for which you are overqualified.

1. Address the issue in your cover letter.

State clearly your interest in changing industries. Express your knowledge of the industry and its challenges. Point out how your background experiences make you a great

candidate. If you are seemingly overqualified, demonstrate your value: better perspective, more patient, and extensive industry knowledge.

2. If transitioning to a new industry, focus your resume on your transferable skills rather than routine responsibilities.

Back up your transferable skills with illustrative accomplishments. Translate industry-specific jargon into general terminology. Give less "white space" to company names if they are commonly connected with your industry. White space is just what it sounds like: white area around words. Words or phrases surrounded by white space stand out and attract the eye.

3. If over qualified, downplay your managerial responsibilities and highlight your hands-on activities and contributions.

Give less "white space" to your job title. Don't quantify information such as number of employees managed, amount of budget overseen, etc.

Many job seekers feel that if they can just get the interview they can sell the interviewer on their qualifications. That may be so, but without a convincing cover letter and resume, the interview won't happen. If you feel you're being screened out unjustly, try these suggestions and see if you don't get better results.

From an article by:

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3. Boomers Corner: Your Next Chapter

Retirement Age:

In a large survey of the American workforce, employees gave a surprising answer to the question. *At what age do you plan on retiring?* The most popular answer was "**never**" with 34 percent saying they won't retire at all. Twenty-five percent plan on retiring between ages 61 and 65, 20 percent between 51 and 60, and 16 percent between 66 and 75. The largely pessimistic survey results show that employees are uninspired by their jobs and their companies, senior management is not seen as committed to improving employee skills, and employees are dissatisfied with their managers. The study of 7,718 American workers aged 18 and over was conducted by Harris Interactive for Age Wave and the Concours Group.

4. Success Story

Alice Sherman, 42

Divorced mother of a teenage daughter

Alice Sherman was laid off from her program management job in Mountain View. She found a job a year later as marketing coordinator for the Web sales and marketing team for Intuit. Networking played a significant role finding the position--Alice joined job support groups and attended networking nights for unemployed African American professionals. She told everyone she knew that she was out of work, and she reminded him or her often. She treated every encounter as if it were a job opportunity. Through networking, her resume landed in front of the hiring manager at Intuit. She did extensive research on the company prior to her interview.

Her advice: "Stay really positive. You never know who might talk to one day. People won't recommend you if they don't believe in you or don't like you."

5. Humor Department

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL TERMS AND THEIR REAL MEANINGS

AVERAGE EMPLOYEE	Not too bright
EXCEPTIONALLY WELL QUALIFIED	Made no major blunders yet
ACTIVE SOCIALLY	Drinks a lot
FAMILY IS ACTIVE SOCIALLY	Spouse drinks, too
CHARACTER ABOVE REPROACH	Still one step ahead of the law
ZEALOUS ATTITUDE	Opinionated
QUICK THINKING	Offers plausible excuses
CAREFUL THINKER	Won't make a decision
TAKES PRIDE IN WORK	Conceited
PLANS FOR ADVANCEMENT	Buys drinks for all the boys
FORCEFUL	Argumentative
AGGRESSIVE	Obnoxious
USES LOGIC ON DIFFICULT JOBS	Gets someone else to do it
A KEEN ANALYST	Thoroughly confused
EXPRESSES THEMSELVES WELL	Speaks English
CONSCIENTIOUS	Scared
METICULOUS ATTENTION TO DETAIL	A nitpicker
HAS LEADERSHIP QUALITIES	Is tall or has a loud voice
EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD JUDGMENT	Lucky
KEEN SENSE OF HUMOR	Knows a lot of dirty jokes
STRONG PRINCIPLES	Stubborn
CAREER MINDED	Back Stabber
COMING ALONG WELL	About to be let go
OF GREAT VALUE TO THE ORGANIZATION	Gets to work on time
RELAXED ATTITUDE	Sleeps at desk
WORK IS FIRST PRIORITY	Too unattractive to get a date
INDEPENDENT WORKER	Nobody knows what he/she does

FORWARD THINKING
GREAT PRESENTATION SKILLS
GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS
LOYAL

Procrastinator
Able to BS.
Spends lots of time on phone
can't get a job anywhere else

From the Netscrap Website

6. Words that Inspire

Whether it's the best of times or the worst of times, it's the only time we've got."
--Art Buchwald, journalist

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

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