



## Randy's Work *and You*

July Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

On Tuesday, June 21, I attended the Silicon Valley Boomer Ventures Summit at Santa Clara University. It was sponsored in part by The Center For Innovation and Entrepreneurship (The Leavy School of Business), Intel, Sun Microsystems and Wells Fargo. Presentations covered a global look at Boomer demographics, investment strategies for healthy living, how Boomers will use technology, and emerging boomer markets. Besides having a fabulous opportunity to network, there were several key pieces of information that I acquired. See below in #3.

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 Class:** July 7 and June 14. The sponsoring organization is Tamalpais District Community Education. The place is Redwood High School, Larkspur, and Marin County. For details, go to [www.marinlearn.com/ <http://www.marinlearn.com/>](http://www.marinlearn.com/) .

### **This month's topics:**

- 1. The Top 10 Questions Most Often Asked by Interviewers**
- 2. How Too Many Long Hours Can Be Bad for Your Career**
- 3. Boomers' Corner—Boomer Conference, 6/21**
- 4. Success Story**
- 5. Humor Department**
- 6. Words that Inspire**

### **1. The Top 10 Questions Most Often Asked by Interviewers**

To be prepared for an interview it is helpful to have an understanding of the questions you may be asked and to have prepared answers for them. As you read the questions below, think of adaptations to these and then answer them. You may want to say your answers out loud while looking in a mirror to see how you look and sound. Another great tip is to record your answers into a tape recorder and then play it back and see what it sounds like. Practice your answers and then go take charge of your career and get the job you want and find the employer you want to work for!

1. Which supervisors have you found easiest to work with and which have been most difficult? *This is to judge your adaptability.*
2. What did you like best and least about your previous job? *Checking your administration and management skills.*
3. Have you ever had to get a point across to different types of people? Give me an example and tell me what approach did you take? *Finding out about your communication skills.*
4. Describe a work-related problem you had to face recently. What did you do to deal with it? *Decision making skills tested.*
5. Give me an example of a time you did more than what was required in your job. *Seeking initiative.*
6. Give me an example of a time you found it necessary to make an exception to the rules in order to get something done. *How is your integrity?*

7. What was the best decision you ever made? What were the alternatives? How did you go about making it? *Checking your judgment.*
8. Tell me about a time you had to gain the cooperation of a group over which you had little or no authority. What did you do? How effective were you? *Leadership.*
9. Have you ever had trouble learning a new method or procedure? How did you deal with that situation? *Investigating your learning ability.*
10. Tell me about a problem you have had that would affect more than one department. How did you try to solve it? *For organizational cooperation.*

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## 2. How Too Many Long Hours Can Be Bad for Your Career

Approximately 2,500 years ago, Confucius told his students: "To go too far is as bad as to fall short." Excessive work, he said, is as undesirable as laziness. As simple as this advice may sound, most of us still fail to grasp it, thinking that the only downsides of overwork are fatigue and burnout. In reality, the side effects can be much more serious. Especially for managers, hard work can become toxic at extreme doses and "poison" a career.

First, working excessively long hours can mask weaknesses. These may surface too late, when problems are no longer easily fixed. Consider the manager who routinely does the work of her assistant because she failed to recruit the right person and train him properly. Her superiors may not notice the problem if she's willing to work hard enough. The individual may not even grasp the extent of her problem, as she will probably be busy praising herself for working harder than anyone else.

Consequently, this executive who needs urgent training in human management, instead, can be put in charge of a five-person team. This is when all hell breaks loose. Hard work can't make up for the inefficiencies she creates for five employees. After all, there are only so many hours in a day.

If this manager weren't willing to work insane hours, the problem would have been exposed earlier and addressed before her promotion. In the end, she would go much further in her career. If, however, the problem surfaces as a result of a failure, the manager will have not only a long-term weakness to address but also a fiasco to explain.

Another problem with working long hours is that such a lifestyle is extremely difficult to sustain. An analogy is a company that relies exclusively on price cuts to gain market share. Charging \$1 for a product that costs 98 cents to manufacture is not a sensible strategy, because it leaves no room for error. The first labor strike or product recall can easily drive the corporation into bankruptcy. Similarly, a manager who is working as much as humanly possible has little time to handle common life challenges -- a sick parent, a new baby or a new home purchase. Any additional time required for these things usually must come from working less, as there is often nothing else in such a person's life to cut back on. The ability to outwork others declines as the years go by. As you age, your body, too, will start to protest those all-nighters and refuse to run properly on pizza and Diet Coke.

A third reason why working long hours isn't a sound career strategy is the ease with which it can be copied. It is difficult for a competitor to come out of nowhere and know your customers as well as you do or match the rapport you have developed with top management. But someone can, and often does, appear out of the blue and send more e-mail, prepare more presentations and return more phone calls. To put it in consulting jargon, hard work isn't a "sustainable competitive advantage."

You might ask: "How do I know if I am working too hard?" Here are three ways to tell:

1. Compare your hours to your peers'. Keep an eye on how much time they're spending in the office and try to achieve similar or better results with fewer than average hours. If your hours are above average and your performance isn't, you're probably compensating for some kind of shortcoming.
2. Listen to how people define your strengths. Adjectives such as "hardworking," "dedicated," or "committed" shouldn't show up among your top three qualities. These are copied easily and can't differentiate you as you advance in your career. If you have doubts, pick up a copy of a business publication and read a profile of any top manager. You rarely will find those qualities among their strengths. The list may include "visionary," "bold," "good communicator" and other descriptors, but probably not "hard worker."
3. Finally, ask yourself how much harder you could be working if you really wanted to. If the answer is, "Not much harder," you're in trouble. Should your boss present you with an excellent opportunity and ask you to try harder in return, you'll likely fail to rise to the challenge. You are already trying as hard as possible and can't do any better.

If, on the other hand, you have room to crank up the hours when needed, you can dig into your reserves when the race heats up. This will enable you to perform at your best when it matters the most -- a key quality that differentiates the stars from the rest.

-- Mr. Hunkyar Ozyasar is a former high-yield bond strategist for an investment bank in New York. This article is excerpted from the book he is writing: "When Time Management Fails."

### **3. Boomers Corner: Boomer Conference, 6/21**

Here are some highlights from the conference:

1. On July 1, the first Boomers turned 59 and a half. They can start drawing down on their IRAs and Keoghs and other designated accounts.
2. Intel has formed a Digital Health Investment Group comprising of Personal Health, Digital Hospital, and Biotech (presenter was Sean Cunningham, Director of Strategic Investments, Intel capital).
3. Next year, there will be a Boomer turning 60 every 7.5 seconds.
4. Boomers have over \$3 trillion to spend
5. Boomers want to stay sexy and romantic. Every other Harley Davidson Motorcycle is bought By a Boomer
6. Boomers comprise 30% of the AARP membership and is growing
7. 7 out of 10 Boomers plan on working after the age of 65 (many will have to work to meet expenses).
8. Boomers will spend big bucks on luxury travel. Currently, Boomers account for 40% of all international pleasure travel with Europe being the number one destination.
9. When marketing to boomers, keep in mind: sex sells, women have great buying power, think globally, multicultural, cater to control freaks, be positive, Boomers will make spur of the moment decisions, Boomers will repeat choices in services and products. Boomers will be concerned about their legacy
10. Boomers want to stay healthy, spiritual and make a difference to the world.
11. Fragmented industries such as spas, travel etc will be a target of investors
12. Aging slows down with cognitive development exercise for the brain (Cognitive Orthotics—Posit Science Corporation).
13. Boomers have the highest volunteer rate in the history of the United States and will continue to do so through organizations such as Senior Corps.
14. The disabled will have purchasing power of \$13B.
15. Gay retirement housing will be in demand as well as housing for single boomer women.
16. Time sharing of vacation homes will increase sharply.
17. Most boomers are looking to get the old fire back in the belly. How can they get it back? (Coaches take note).
18. In retail, the fastest growing market segment is luxury clothing for men and women. (Boomers want clothes that are form fitting and stylish... the box look is out).
19. 25% of all Internet users are Boomers. Online influence is the greatest in the following areas: Real estate, Healthcare and Financial Services.
20. The number one U.S. location that has it all for Boomers and their needs is Marin County.

*If you stay one step ahead of the Boomer generation you will do very well. I would say there is opportunity wouldn't you?*

### **4. Success Story**

Todd Keitz: Forties

Early in 2004, after seventeen years of working in the corporate world in leadership positions with healthcare companies, Todd Keitz decided to make his personal passions and hobbies into a career. He's passionate about families, history and film!

Todd's passions date back to two very distinct life experiences: 1) Ever since he first saw his father use an 8mm camera to capture daily family life and special occasions back in the 1960s, Todd has been fascinated and hooked on creating video (and still photography) presentations that capture the heart and soul of the subjects and of the subsequent viewing audience, and 2) For the majority of the past 25 years, since he was first able to drive at the age of 16, Todd has been a volunteer "listener" and "helper" at independent and assisted senior living centers.

Todd's background is much more extensive than his having created film and photo projects for family and friends as a hobby, and listening to older adults talk about their lives. He has extensive professional/business experience that is complimentary to his passions and his role as a principal of Think Back Films.

Think Back Films is dedicated to: creating affordable documentary films (video memoirs) to help individuals and families preserve their history for future generations; leading fun, interesting and informative workshops for baby boomer and older generations, and; developing compelling promotional films for small to mid-sized organizations. His website is <http://www.thinkbackfilms.com/>. His email is [todd\\_keitz@thinkbackfilms.com](mailto:todd_keitz@thinkbackfilms.com).

## 5. Humor Department

### The Lexicon of Intentionally Ambiguous Recommendations (LIAR for short)

A man like him is hard to find.  
*He disappears frequently.*

She was always high in my opinion.  
*She was often seen smoking a joint.*

Most of us had rather good impressions of him.  
*But there was this one guy who could mimic him perfectly.*

He's a man of many convictions.  
*He's got a record a mile long.*

I am pleased to say that she is a former colleague of mine.  
*I can't tell you how happy I am that she left our firm.*

He's a difficult man to replace.  
*He'll sue if you try to fire him.*

He takes a lot of enjoyment out of work.  
*And ruins it for others too.*

She merits a closer look.  
*Don't let her out of your sight.*

He is a man of great visions.  
*He hallucinates.*

He is definitely a man to watch.  
*I don't trust him at all.*

She commands the respect of everyone with whom she works.  
*But she rarely gets it.*

You will never catch him asleep on the job.  
*He's too crafty to get caught.*

He's the kind of employee you can swear by.  
*He likes dirty jokes, too.*

If I were you, I'd give him sweeping responsibilities.  
*He can also handle a mop.*

When I saw her last, her business was just picking up.  
*Litter, mostly.*

When he worked for us, he was given numerous citations.

*He was arrested many times.*

She gives every appearance of being a loyal, dedicated employee.  
*But appearances are deceiving.*

He doesn't mind being disturbed.  
*He sees his shrink far less often than he should.*

From "Your Hire Authority".

## **6. Words that Inspire**

"Success only breeds a new goal"

-- Bette Davis, actor

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## **RANDY BLOCK**

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