



Randy's Work *and You*

July Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

Wow! Could it be that 2008 is half over?

Thinking about starting your own business? The featured article this month, written by my coach, Susan Whitcomb, gives you some insight in answering this question.

In Boomer Corner, I write about how to create revenue for yourself in your 50's, 60's and even 70's. Were you aware that the nursing shortage is abetting somewhat. Leaving retirement, a lot of nurses are returning to work recently. Their pensions and Social Security are just not enough to meet living expenses today.

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

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This month's topics:

- 1. Featured Article: Are You Cut Out to be an Entrepreneur?**
- 2. Interview Tips: Never volunteer!**
- 3. Boomer Corner: Gotta work longer?**
- 4. Success Story**
- 5. Humor Department Prison versus Work**
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1. Are You Cut Out to be an Entrepreneur?

By Susan Whitcomb

As a coach, I am forever in search of life-transforming questions ... questions that will wake up, shake up, and usher in answers ... answers that will help stir the mind, soul and spirit, get hold of new truths, experience new freedoms, and surprise us in achieving what we thought was not possible. In that regard, I recently spoke to a new "solo-preneur" who remarked, "If someone would have told me a year ago that I would be doing what I'm doing today, I wouldn't have

believed him or her. This is like a dream come true."

If you've found yourself downsized or "RIF-ed" as a result of the economy, it may be just the time to dust off those dreams of running your own show. The following questions will help in that regard. What dreams do you wish would come true for your business? What do you think is not possible that you wish was possible? (Even if you're not an entrepreneur or don't have entrepreneurial aspirations, I encourage you to consider these questions, because many will be pertinent toward enjoying career success!)

1. What is your purpose for being in (or opening a new) business?

The answer to this question usually starts with the obvious: putting food on the table, paying for kid's orthodontia, etc. Remember to look beyond the material side of the equation, and tie your purpose to your reason for being here on this planet! What positive impact do you want to have on the territory you've been given in life? How can you take that even further in the year to come?

2. What do you *really* want?

This and the next two questions are closely related. So, what *do* you *really* want? For example, it may be that what you *really* want is to be recognized as the nation's premier interior designer for corporate clients. For others, it may be to earn 20% more in the coming year or to cut back your work hours to have more free time.

3. What *can* you do?

Now let's look at the second of these three related questions: what *can* you do? Filter the answer of what you *really want* through business reality. To illustrate, we'll use the example above of wanting to be the nation's premier interior designer for corporate clients. It may be that there is already one individual who has established him/herself in this position. That doesn't mean you can't still shoot for that goal long-term. Instead, you might start with becoming the premier designer in your state or region, or it might mean that you will tighten your niche to become the premier designer for corporate healthcare clients.

4. What *will* you do?

Finally, in relation to what you *really want* and what you *can do*, what *will* you do? This is the point where action meets intention. To support what you *want* to do and *can* do, you will adopt certain beliefs and commit to a specific list of activities. For instance, a list of "will do" activities might include the following: visualize yourself (make it part of your core being) as *the* design resource for corporate clients, secure a strategic relationship with architects that specialize in healthcare clients, write monthly articles on design for a healthcare association website, and

be a speaker or exhibitor at appropriate healthcare annual conferences.

5. What do you want your business to look like this time next year? What will be in place that isn't present now? What will you have more of? What will you have less of?

Come 12 months from now, how will your business (and life) look different? Name the things you will have more of. Here are a few ideas to prime the pump: more clients, more free time, more administrative support, more disposable income, more peace, more passive-income products, more time tending to the "important but not urgent" things? Likewise, what would you like less of? Would it be less pressure from project deadlines, less worrying where the next client will come from, less clutter in your office, less time tending to the "urgent but not important" things?

6. Now think about how you'd like your business to look well into the future (depending on where you are in life, this might be 5, 10, 20, or 30 years from now). What are some of the highlights?

Imagine that you're at your retirement gala. Clients, coworkers, and colleagues are sharing memories about some of the projects and talents you are known for. What is the feeling in the room? What stories are being told? A reporter is at the event, taking notes to compile a feature story on your career. What catchy headline captures who you are and what you've accomplished?

7. Ideally, what image/brand would you like colleagues and clients to have of you?

Clients will think of us in the way we think of ourselves. We must first know our brand and act in accordance with it. For instance, if your brand involves technology, you should know the difference between a Blackberry and an iPod (and probably carry both in your pocket or handbag)! If your brand is about expertise, then earn the highest credentials for that field and write articles and books on the subject. If you want clients to see you as successful, you must think successful and act the part!

8. What are the problems, as opposed to the needs, of your clients?

Every good careerist/entrepreneur knows that you should "Find a need and fill it." This is certainly good advice. I'd also encourage you to look beyond needs to the problems of your clients. Here, you'll find the root of the need, and at the root of the need you'll find the heart of value. As an example, in my early years as a resume writer I would find clients returning to me within a year or two and telling me that the new jobs they landed weren't a good fit. This was part of my impetus to begin career consulting and later coaching. The client's need was a resume update, but the problem was that the client didn't know his/her motivated skills,

interests, and values that would lead to career satisfaction. Understand your client's problems and offer solutions in the form of new services or, at the least, referrals to others who can help.

9. What do you need to do to prepare yourself to serve clients better?

What are the trends for your market or industry? Who can help you find this information? What trend-forecasting resources are available for your industry? Do those trends mean you need to brush up on certain skills?

10. What opportunities are out there that you are not taking advantage of?

Change begins with awareness. Put on what I refer to as the "My Favorite Martian" antenna (remember the old television show?). Wearing your antenna will help you see the opportunities that surround you.

Source: Career Coach Academy (www.CareerCoachAcademy.com <

2. Interview Tips

Never volunteer anything in an interview.

My dad warned me when I went into the Army: "Don't volunteer!" it did indeed help me get through my relatively short military career.

Although I applaud those who volunteer their time for worthy causes, volunteering has no place in the interview. The number one mistake candidates make in an interview is that they talk too much. They give too much information. They want to make sure that the interviewer gets plenty of data. Candidates may even interrupt with *more* information.

In the role of an interviewer, I would encounter this more often than you might think. I was fairly forgiving for one or two questions. But if it happened more than that, I would then come to one of two conclusions: (1), the candidate likes to ramble and it then becomes a style issue. If my client (the hiring manager) also likes to talk there is some common ground here or (2) the candidate lacks confidence in their answer (perhaps to the point of low self esteem).

In typical fashion, the candidate may have answered the question, but kept right on talking. They would volunteer information such as a story or continue to expound on a point. I didn't ask for the story or additional information.

The takeaway is: Just answer the question to the point. Give them what they ask for— no more or less. If they want more information they will ask. If you'd like to add a story or some additional information, check in with the interviewer to see if they are interested in receiving it.

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Randy brings expertise in executive search as a certified career coach. He has guided all levels of professionals in the areas of career transition: changing careers, choosing a career direction, evaluating/negotiating offers, executive career marketing, finding jobs, getting organized, as well as finding opportunities for self-employment, freelancing and consulting. He holds an **IJCTC** certificate from the Career Planning and Adult Development, a **CCMC** (Certified Career Management Coach) from Career Coach

3. Boomer Corner: Living and Working Past 50 and Through your Full Retirement Years

Do you have to work until you drop?

By Randy Block

It's hard to escape the media: it's all around us blaring that we might not have enough saved for retirement. We've also read that retirement is being redefined (this is not your father's "retirement").

It seems that we Boomers fall into two categories when it comes to living and meeting expenses past sixty:

- Got enough with choices
- Need enough: got to work

If you are in the first category, I wish you my heartiest congratulations. I hope that you continue to find purpose in your life and help make the world a better place. Keep in mind, though, that working at what you love keeps you young and mentally sharp.

This article is dedicated to the rest of us in the second category. Some of us may have retired at an earlier age, and now find that our resources will not be enough: we have to re-enter the workplace. Others know that they haven't saved enough, as well as watching the equity in their homes and/or their 401K's deplete. And some of us have no savings at all.

Regardless of which category you are in, we're all faced with rising fuel, food, and healthcare expenses.

What Organizations Want

All organizations have ongoing challenges, which can be painful. Anyone who has budget or profit and loss responsibility is always thinking about revenue and productivity. There is always a push to be more profitable and/or self-sustaining. Perhaps you can help.

Who will hire you?

Yes, there are companies that make the AARP list as “senior friendly.” But there are many other organizations, which share the same “pain” as those on AARP’s list. Even non-profits have revenue and productivity concerns. It doesn’t matter what job title is: the employers’ concerns come down to either productivity or revenue generation.

Simply put, if you can help organizations with either of those two goals, you’ve got something in common with them, something that they need. Relationships are built upon the mutual satisfaction of each other’s needs. So they need the help and you need the work. But organizations will not beat a path to your door. No surprise here.

Creating that revenue stream

So Uncle Charlie didn’t leave you a fortune and you didn’t win the lottery. You have to work for the next 10, 15, 20 years. You also know that age discrimination is alive and well. All is not lost. Here’s an outline of steps you can take to have some fun and make money at the same time:

1. Know your transferable skills. These are skills that perhaps you were born with. When you are using these skills, you feel energized and enjoy yourself. When you change industries, lead with these. Working at a job that you don’t like will age you and probably hurt your health (you are not in your 20s or 30s anymore).
2. Know your career values. Every decision that we make is based on some value. We know that half of a hiring decision is chemistry. In my view, much of that chemistry comes from shared values. We interview, network, and even choose our friends based on shared values.
3. Know your acquired skills. These are the skills that you have learned through training, education, and experience. Are they current? If not, update them. If you can’t update them, they are of no use to you other than as a hobby.
4. Develop your Value Proposition. A value proposition is your statement of what you do (relative to productivity and revenue) that adds value to an organization. All organizations (including nonprofits) are hiring *solutions: not people*. The good news is that all organizations seek just two kinds of solutions: revenue and productivity. Be sure that you “metricize” your accomplishments. The value proposition should reflect your values, transferable skills, and your acquired strengths.
5. Choose one or two industries that interest you. Create your own selection criteria (location, projected future growth, etc.). Then select a market segment. The key concept here is that you are *authentically interested*.
6. Select the top 15 companies in that segment. Again, one of the bonds that you can create with strangers is that you are both genuinely excited about a service or product, as well as revenue and productivity.
7. Go to your network. People in your network want to know how they can help you (sending them a resume usually is a waste of time). Ask them who they know

in your target companies. The average adult knows 250 people. Remember that there are professionals you deal with who have big Rolodexes (your accountant, doctor, dentist, chiropractor, real estate agent; don't forget your mechanic). Networking should now be a lifestyle.

8. Seek the strategic relationships first; the work will follow. If you are leading with your resume, you can expect minimal yield (but you already knew that didn't you?). Find out where the pain is first. Be open to a permanent, part time, or a short-term contract solution. The right question is "What's the work?" not "What's the job?" A contract, or even a temporary job, can lead to a permanent position more easily than trying to get a permanent job on the front end.

And remember:

Keep in mind that *young managers don't want to hire their mother or their father.* Focus on what you have in common relative to their own involvement: interest in the product or service; increasing revenue and productivity. Put another way, if you want to be perceived as interesting, be *genuinely* interested.

Even though you are more than half way through your life, you really have a lot of quality time ahead of you. You can have fun and make money at the same time.

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4. Success Story

Marcy, Age 41, Mother of a Five-Year-Old

Layoffs were nothing new to her. She had been laid off from her computer supply job in the 80s, from her job in publishing in the 90s, and laid off from her job as a Webmaster for the Pacific Exchange. The Web job well ran dry.

Someone suggested that she consider a government job, which would give her the flexibility that she craved. She began searching on federal jobs Web site, <http://www.fedworld.gov> <<http://www.fedworld.gov>> . She requested that only California government jobs be e mailed to her, and landed a job.

She has been working on the job for the last year. She is making about \$20,000 less than what she was making, but she says that the benefits, flexible schedule, and climate of fairness make up for the loss of salary.

She says: "If you feel like you have qualifications and other people are getting the jobs because they're good at schmoozing, then the government would be good for you."

5. Humor Department

Just to make sure you have the definitions right: Prison and work.

IN PRISON... you spend the majority of your time in an 8 x 10 cell.
AT WORK... you spend the majority of your time in a 6 x 8 cubicle.

IN PRISON... you get three meals a day.
AT WORK... you only get a break for one meal and you have to pay for it.

IN PRISON... you get time off for good behavior.
AT WORK... you get rewarded for good behavior with more work.

IN PRISON... the guard locks and unlocks all the doors for you.
AT WORK... you must carry around a security card and open all the doors for yourself.

IN PRISON... you can watch TV and play games.
AT WORK... you get fired for watching TV and playing games.

IN PRISON... they allow your family and friends to visit.
AT WORK... you can't even speak to your family.

IN PRISON... the taxpayers pay all expenses with no work required.
AT WORK... you get to pay all the expenses to go to work and then they deduct taxes from your salary to pay for prisoners.

IN PRISON... you spend most of your life looking through bars from inside wanting to get out.
AT WORK... you spend most of your time wanting to get out and go inside bars.

IN PRISON... you must deal with sadistic wardens.
AT WORK... they are called managers.

6. Words that Inspire

"Life is 10 percent what you make it and 90 percent in how you take it."

--Irving Berlin, songwriter

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