



Randy's Work *and You*

July Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

Wow! 2009 is half gone already! From my reading and conversations with others, it seems that the economy has bottomed out. However, permanent job recovery reflecting the early 2008 market is expected in 2011. Translated, looking for work should be your primary goal. Not looking for a full time job.

Our lead article talks about the need of your personal brand—that which reflects your unique expertise. In Interview Corner, I discuss the importance of rehearsing before an interview. Boomer Corner features the “Seven Keys To A Successful Retirement”.

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:

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2. **Interview Tips: Rehearse, Rehearse, and Rehearse!**
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1. **To Win a Job: Act Like an Expert, Not a Job Seeker**

By Joe Turner, "The Job Search Guy"

There are over 14 million people out of work with unemployment is at it's highest in 34 years. Competition for jobs in this recession has never been fiercer.

I speak with candidates every week during my resume writing workshops. Too often I encounter a defensive, apologetic attitude among my listeners. Many spend too much time worrying about finding a job and not enough about their true place in this newly evolving economy.

While we can't change the actual number of available jobs, we can change the way we think, and how we present ourselves to those who are "buying". And it is a buyers'

market, no question. To become relevant in today's job market, adopt this single most important behavior modification:

Stop acting like a job SEEKER and start acting like an EXPERT in your niche or field.

The biggest mistake that most job seekers make today is to believe that a job is manna doled out from the heavens above. Too many job candidates try to sell their skills or length of service hoping that someone will notice them. If you're still doing this, stop. It's no longer effective in today's job market. Your skills are just a commodity. Thousands have comparable skills or better. You'll never distinguish yourself with this approach.

Embrace a new approach and sell the one thing the employer really needs - your EXPERTISE.

Whatever your role is, you have a bottom line impact on the hiring manager. Your job is to communicate your true value clearly and specifically to your next employer. Your major task is to change your thinking and your behavior from that of a job seeker to that of an expert.

Take some time to develop specific ways to show your expertise in your job or profession. Demonstrate how you help solve a problem or produce a specific positive result for your employer or client.

Sit down with a legal pad and list all of your achievements from current or past jobs. If you're stumped, list your job roles and duties. Then ask the question, "So what?" after each one. What you're after is the ACHIEVEMENT. When I say "achievement", I don't mean the role you played or the duties you fulfilled. What we need here is the end result, the benefit to the client or employer as a result of something that you did or contributed.

How did your employer or client benefit? How was their life made better?

For example, let's say you're a front office manager. One of your achievements was that you decreased file retrieval time by at least 70% by auditing admissions. This resulted in a much more efficiently streamlined filing system.

Here, your expertise is producing time savings for the front office staff. Now identify other examples of similar accomplishments in your previous work. By describing several examples, you are building a case that proves you are an *expert in saving time for the front office*.

Here's another example. Let's say you're an operations manager for a medical clinic. One of your past achievements was to reduce your employer's payroll cost by \$1,125 per week by the reduction of supervising doctor hours from 5 nights a week to only 2 nights.

Here, your expertise might be reduction of payroll and expenses. Now identify other similar cost reduction examples that prove your expertise in this area.

Promote Your Expertise

When you analyze your achievements, you'll find a pattern emerging around some key areas. This will most likely be your area of expertise. You now have something employers will want. Knowing your areas of expertise, develop a new summary statement on your resume - your USP or Unique Selling Proposition. Your USP incorporates your expertise in plain, return-on-investment language.

For example, the operations manager above might have a USP summary on his resume that reads something like this:

"Innovative Medical Operations Manager whose strengths in cost-cutting and department realignment have saved my employer \$300K in 12 months."

Once you've identified your primary expertise, you can position yourself as an expert in that niche on your resume by incorporating this statement. It becomes your verbal "elevator pitch" to use at any in-person meeting as well as during your phone screen and interview. When you back this up with several examples, you stop looking like a job seeker who's merely peddling skills and begin to look like the professional you are - an expert at solving problems in your niche.

Summary

Stop thinking of yourself as merely a "job seeker". Replace this defensive mentality in your job search. Shift your mindset to that of an expert in your niche. By developing specific examples of how you've solved past problems for your employer or client, you begin to position yourself as a *professional* - someone of value to your next employer. You'll gain confidence in your job search and score higher in your interviews. Stop thinking, "I need a job", and start thinking, "I can solve your problem".

As a recruiter, Joe Turner spent 15 years finding and placing top candidates in some of the best jobs of their careers. The author of ***Job Search Secrets Unlocked*** and ***Paycheck 911***, Joe also hosts his weekly ***Job Search Guy Radio Show*** on JobRadio.fm as well as other locations. You'll find free tips and advice on landing a job in this tough economy at: <http://www.jobchangesecrets.com>.

2. Interview Tips—Rehearse, Rehearse, Rehearse!

Successful movie stars get that way because they rehearse and know their lines. Outtakes are funny but they wind up on the cutting room floor.

Avoid embarrassment with a well-practiced response. The weakness question, tell me about yourself, why should we hire you are just a few questions that you don't want to get flustered.

On my website (<http://www.randyblock.com>), click on "Interview training/coaching. You can download for free "The Most Difficult Questions You Can Be Asked In An Interview". I offer ways to frame your answers.

Ask your spouse or a friend to ask you the questions. It is a verbal replay after all.

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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 Academy.

3. Boomer Corner-- The Seven Keys To A Successful Retirement

By Robert Powell, MarketWatch

BOSTON (MarketWatch) -- Dead is the new retirement. OK, that doesn't sound appealing, but working till you drop is a heck of a lot better than playing crappy golf at the country club, eating chicken salad sandwiches for lunch, and complaining about your gall bladder.

At least, it is if you can find a job in retirement that brings meaning and happiness. So says Marshall Goldsmith, whose blog entry "Brett Favre and the Difficult Art of Retiring Successfully" appeared last August on the Harvard Business Review's Web site. Read that entry.

Yes, retirement in the traditional sense is no longer the ideal, according to Goldsmith, who is also author of "Succession: Are You Ready?" and a consultant to executives. Job market tough, even for Wolf Men

The high national jobless rate means that there is plenty of competition for even offbeat jobs, such as that of "Wolfman" at tourist attraction Clark's Trading Post. Jennifer Levitz reports.

"You think it sounds good until you do it," Goldsmith said in a recent interview. "It's a disaster. Wives and adult children aren't waiting around waiting for you to grace them with your presence."

Rather than sitting around doing nothing in retirement, Goldsmith said, would-be retirees should scope out what they want to do long before rolling over their 401(k) into an IRA. Yes, you will need some bare minimum requirements in place before seeking out the next new thing in life. You'll need good health and healthy relationships with family and friends. Also, it would be nice to be wealthy enough to pursue your new career free from worry about money. But that's not essential. What is essential is this:

1. Make a contribution

Whatever you do next, it should be meaningful. It should make you happy. It should make you feel as if you're making a contribution. And whatever you do, don't let your age be the limiting factor. Consider, for instance, the life of management guru Peter Drucker. "Many of his greatest contributions came after he turned 60," Goldsmith said. "Imagine if he had retired at that age."

2. Do more of the same, or not

Doing nothing isn't an option. In fact, it's a bad plan. Experts don't disagree about that. They do, however, debate whether you should do what you know in retirement or do something entirely different.

For his part, Goldsmith said you should simply do what you love to do, be it the same-old, same-old or something entirely different. "If you love what you do, it's a non-issue," he said. If you aren't doing what you love in retirement, then you might want to do some soul-searching.

Of course, that's sometimes easier said than done. Consider the case of Brett Favre. Favre, the once-great Green Bay Packer and then not-so-great New York Jet, was contemplating -- at press time, anyway -- coming out of retirement yet again to do the thing that he loves doing. Last year at this time, Goldsmith was encouraging Favre to play football because it was "something to do" as opposed to nothing. One year later, however, there are many who say that Favre will have to decide between doing nothing and doing something other than football. Goldsmith, for his part, doesn't want to tell Favre what to do next. "Brett has to do what's right for Brett," he said.

3. It takes work to find work in retirement

With the exception of Jack Welch and perhaps Favre, the world isn't holding its collective breath waiting for you to retire so that you can grace this or that entity with your skills, knowledge and experience. No, you will have to work hard at finding the next thing to do, according to Goldsmith. "It requires work," he said. "You need to set your ego aside, show some humility and be open-minded."

In addition, Goldsmith said, you may have to set aside any notions about working only for a nonprofit organization. In some cases, you may enjoy working more for a for-profit company. But whether you work for a nonprofit or a for-profit, remember: "You are there to serve them," he said. It's not the other way around.

Also, Goldsmith said, it could take a great deal of soul-searching to figure out what you want to do with the rest of your life. So don't wait until the first day of retirement to think about what could be the most important part of your life. That doesn't mean you should know exactly what it is that you want to do. You could have a "vague idea," he said, but you should also be open to the possibilities.

4. Wait before you leap

Given the current economy, it's quite possible there aren't a lot of jobs out there at the moment for retirees. Indeed, a recent Urban Institute report finds that the recession has

increased joblessness among older Americans. Read the report.

In other words, you might want to wait before telling your boss to take your job and you-know-what with it. "You don't want to cut off your nose to spite your face," Goldsmith said. If you get angry with your employer and you don't have a place to go, you should take a deep breath and ask yourself this question: "Is what I am about to do in the best interest of myself and my family?" If not, you might want to hold your tongue until you have alternatives in place.

5. Get real offers

Now, it's one thing to say that you want to work in retirement. But it's a whole 'nother thing to do so. According to Goldsmith, all is fiction and fantasy until real offers cross your desk. With a real offer, you can evaluate whether the next new thing is in your wheelhouse or not. "With a real offer, you can make a real decision," he said.

6. Promote yourself

In retirement, you will need to learn how to be your own best advocate. "You will have to learn how to sell yourself," Goldsmith said. "You will have to learn how to promote yourself in a positive way." In the absence of such self-promotion, someone else is likely to end up with the job you covet.

7. Working, out of want or need

Whether you work in retirement because you need the money or because you want to work, Goldsmith said the end game is the same. "Even for those who have to work, this doesn't change anything," he said. "You have to find meaning and happiness in your life."

4. **Success Story**

Ron Age 59

Ron had a very successful career in advertising and marketing. He held senior positions with J. Walter Thompson and McCann-Erickson advertising. He made a reputation building brand value through customer acquisition programs based on measured Return-On-Investment from Integrated Marketing.

He lost his job. Despite being nationally known, he was having a difficult time finding a position. With vision and a good sense of the possible - and in the true spirit of "networking" - he hooked into an interim revenue stream; a company called Excel Telecommunications in the \$28 billion Network Marketing industry. He has successfully transferred his talents and his business is exploding.

5. **Humor Department: The Top 10 Shortest Job Descriptions**

- Help people hate each other: Divorce Lawyer
- Stand on a field and get yelled at for hours: Baseball Umpire
- Talk in other people's sleep: College Professor
- Call people who know what they're doing and ask them what they're doing: Incident

Manager

- Show people how beautiful the Earth would be without them: Mountain Landscape Photographer/Climber
- Make people feel bad about their work: Quality Assurance Tester
- Repeatedly fix what you repeatedly break: IT Director
- Clean up an animal that makes more money than me in a year: Assistant Horse Trainer
- Write words that no one wants to read: Technical Writer
- Make food that is as healthy before it goes in your body as when it comes back out: Fast Food Employer


6. Words that Inspire

The purpose of life is a life of purpose.
Robert Byrne

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