



Randy's Work *and You*

May Edition

Dear clients and colleagues,

What? May here already?

The only job books needed in your library?

In a client session this week, I pulled three books from my library: *JobShift* by William Bridges, *Flawless Consulting* by Peter Block (no relation), and *Cool Careers For Dummies* by Marty Nemko and Paul and Sarah Edwards. I recommended that the client read all three in the exact order above:

1. The Bridges book to get acclimated to the new "job" paradigm (surviving in a work place with declining full-time permanent jobs),
2. The Block book to learn how to successfully perform short-term contracts with the potential of becoming full time,
3. The Nemko/Edwards book to advance your career after you have landed the full time job from your short-term contract work.

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: May 17 and May 24. The sponsoring organization is Tamalpais District Community Education. The place is Redwood High School, Larkspur, Marin County.
For details, go to www.marinlearn.com/ <<http://www.marinlearn.com/>> .

This month's topics:

1. **The Best Process for Finding Job Leads**
2. **Job Sharing: How Women Are Transforming the Practice of Leadership**
3. **Boomers' Corner: An Older Worker's Guide to Getting a Job**
4. **Success Story**
5. **Humor Department**
6. **Words that Inspire**

1. The Best Process For Finding Job Leads

Dr. Randall S. Hansen

"Where are the jobs? Who is hiring? How does one find employers with job openings?"

And you know, if you are actively seeking a new job, the answers to these questions are pretty darn important. So, where can job seekers find job leads?

Here are some important sources of job leads:

Your network of contacts. One of the most important activities you can do as a job-seeker is to cultivate, build, and mine your network of family, friends, former co-workers and bosses, colleagues, former teachers, neighbors, and anyone else you know. Your network is simply the people with whom you have a personal or business relationship. Since most of these people work--and know others in their network that also work--they have the inside track to many job leads that never get posted or advertised publicly. Thus, the more people you know, the higher the potential for job leads.

Your industry or professional organization. Most industries have at least one trade or professional organization, and some have multiple ones. Many of these organizations now have some form of job-posting board--but don't stop there. Many also have company news sections--and a company planning a major expansion will also go on a hiring binge. And if the organization has an annual conference, there is most likely some form of interviewing taking place, either formally through the organization or informally.

Your college's career services and alumni offices. If you're a college graduate--and you are not taking advantage of one of your greatest sources of job leads--get on it today. Your college's career services office is not just useful for when you are a student; alumni can use it also. And these offices are plugged into the local business community. And don't forget the alumni office. Many older alumni are in a position to make key hiring decisions--and often have a soft spot for job seekers who are fellow alumni.

Job and Career Fairs. I never understand the logic of job seekers who choose not to attend these great networking and job-hunting events. Employers specifically send representatives to career fairs to gather resumes and meet potential job candidates. Keep your eye out for local and virtual job fairs and, whenever possible, attend them and mine the company reps for information about job leads.

Cold Contact/Direct Mail. If you have a specific geographic location--or a specific set of companies you want to work for--then preparing a direct marketing campaign is a great way to tap into the hidden job market, and where all job leads originate. Be sure to get the name of the hiring manager for your area, and write a convincing cover letter showcasing your skills and accomplishments. Include a targeted resume. You just never know when your letter will arrive on a day someone is getting promoted, someone resigns, or someone requests a leave of absence.

Of course, there are a number of other sources, including the many, many job boards existing in cyberspace.

Dr. Randall S. Hansen is a nationally recognized career and job-search expert. He is currently Webmaster of Quintessential Careers, as well as publisher of its electronic newsletter, QuintZine <<http://www.quintcareers.com/QuintZine/>> . He writes a biweekly career advice column under the name, The Career Doctor <<http://www.careerdoctor.org/>> . Dr. Hansen is a certified electronic career coach. He is also a tenured, associate professor of marketing in the School of Business Administration at Stetson University in DeLand, Florida. He is an author and presenter of hundreds of publications and papers. He is co-author, with Katharine Hansen, of the top-selling Dynamic Cover Letters. And he has been an employer and consultant dealing with hiring and firing decisions for the past fifteen years. His opinions and comments are often quoted in the media. Read more about Dr. Hansen <http://www.quintcareers.com/web_master.html> . He can be reached at randall@quintcareers.com <<mailto:randall@quintcareers.com>> .

2. Job Sharing

Book Excerpt:

Enlightened Power: How Women are Transforming the Practice of Leadership

Shelley Murray and Cynthia Cunningham

We are two women who shared one job. For six years, we held a single full-time position as vice presidents in the Global Rate Markets Group at Fleet Boston Financial. This was not a temporary solution to provide us with more flexible working hours during a particular stage of life; this was the right lifestyle choice for us.

Imagine how radical our work arrangement seemed in the very conventional world of a major financial institution. We are very different individuals who shared one set of responsibilities, one set of performance objectives, and one performance review. Not only was our circumstance unusual, but also so were our working hours. We each worked two full days and one half day a week, overlapping on Tuesdays. Although

we considered this time together to be important, it meant that we were not physically present at our desks for the standard forty hours per week. On a busy trading floor, where the pace rarely slows down, the act of going home early carries with it special burdens. It was never easy to rise from our desks, nod good-bye to coworkers who barely looked up from their own work, and leave for our personal lives--but it was always worth it.

We made that choice because the opportunity for a more well-rounded and integrated life was too important for us to pass up. Just the same, the path we took was filled with difficult challenges and is certainly not for everyone. There is no such thing as having it all.

Selling a Radical Proposal

Six years ago, we were both successful BankBoston branch managers working sixty-hour workweeks. We knew each other by reputation as high performers. We recognized a similar drive, work ethic, and ambition in each other, as well as a similar strain. Our long and intense work hours were helping to further our careers, but those careers were also creating a major barrier to motherhood. We both wanted to continue to excel in our jobs, and we also wanted more time with our children. It seemed an impossible balance.

That's when Cindy approached Shelley with a novel idea. Why not package and promote ourselves as one candidate to share a single job? We could spend half as much time at work and twice as much time with our families. Friends and peers asked, "Are you sure you want to do this?" Even putting the proposal forward to the bank seemed risky to our careers. We knew that our arrangement had to make business sense to the bank. In retrospect, this was the most critical element to making our idea succeed. How were we going to help the bank exceed its goals while we worked in a different capacity?

When we had sketched out our proposal and combined our résumés, we found that we had an appealing package, so we sent letters to all of the key senior executives notifying them of our interest. Many of them were intrigued and agreed to meet with us. One of those senior executives was a woman. She listened to our pitch and sent an email out to five of her peers. That letter helped get us in the door at the Global Rate Markets Group. Our experience made us an ideal candidate for the job. We received an offer that doubled our combined salaries. We became responsible for the sales and marketing of commercial foreign exchange products through a delivery network of the bank's retail branches.

In our proposal, we agreed to work twenty hours a week, splitting the salary. Fortunately, and to BankBoston's credit, twenty hours a week did make us eligible for full benefits. Our responsibilities and objectives would be decided on as if we were one full-time employee. Our performance would be evaluated as if we were one employee.

Communication between employer and employee--and, to be sure, between the job-sharing employees themselves--is crucial. The situation works best when the manager demonstrates open support in the presence of team members and colleagues, and when the employee is as flexible as possible in meeting the business need. There is a fine line, however, between flexibility and personal compromise. If the employee allows that line to be crossed too frequently or in a precedent-setting way--either from personal volition or because of the pressure from managers or peers--then the progress that has been made may prove unsustainable.

Meeting and Exceeding the Daily Challenges

We quickly realized the need to overachieve and prove ourselves above and beyond the call. Because we were constantly being watched and tested, we needed to perform at high levels 100 percent of the time. We learned that you must always be on top of your game--and make no mistake: despite how seriously you may view the stakes, it *is* a game.

How does that game play out? One of the pitfalls of our arrangement was how severely it limited networking with coworkers. This set into motion all kinds of ramifications and complications. On the job, we were working full speed as much as possible. Most days, people got up from their desks to exchange small talk, ideas, and even crucial information only after the trading day winds down. By that time, we had been gone for several hours. One of our previous managers drove this point home when he told us, confidentially, that we were seen as an "enigma" by others in the group because they didn't really know us on a personal basis. To our minds, there were many people on our large trading floor who did not know each other well or at all. Yet because of our special status peers and managers held us to a different standard alike.

Some of the inevitable jealousy from coworkers was quite understandable. Although most of our colleagues said they supported our career choice, in reality some of those same coworkers tried to undermine our success. The fact is, you have to watch your back. Teammates may want you to fail, and you are not always going to be there to defend yourself. One of our colleagues, for instance, made a point of publicly asking what time we were leaving for the day even though our hours were posted on our desk for all to see. This was not an occasional or unintended moment of forgetfulness. . . . *He asked us this question every day for five years.*

In some ways, we can't even blame this colleague for his lack of understanding. Unfortunately, seat time or "face time" is still considered an indication of productivity. Even organizations that say they measure performance by objective standards of productivity still, unconsciously perhaps, judge effort by how early you arrive and how late you leave. Management did not necessarily believe that we really wanted to climb the corporate ladder--or that we were able to. We were made aware of how real this problem was come annual review time. Despite the fact that we continued to meet and exceed goals that are the same as those of our colleagues and that we consistently received high performance ratings, in at least one instance we received a lower evaluation and bonus than a colleague whom we outperformed. The difference? This colleague was in the office all the time.

Staying the Course and Reaping the Benefits

We felt many threats to our job-sharing arrangement over the six years of our journey. Two years ago, we were suddenly asked to submit a proposal for our current job, as if we were coming into it for the very first time. It seemed likely that the expectation was that we would feel pressured by this request and would come back with a proposal that would involve us spending more time in the office. We held firm, however, and managed to preserve our limits. It wasn't easy, but it was always worth it. A bad manager can use an arrangement such as ours as a weapon to force you into a more difficult position. A good manager will evaluate your performance objectively and applaud you for your contributions to the team's success.

From our perspective, this was a positive experience. Fundamentally, we obtained exactly what we wanted. We spent more time with our children--time we simply didn't have before. We chose to set our priorities, and by being able to make those choices, we felt empowered and in control of our lives. We also developed new personal skills. We became better communicators by necessity. To make our arrangement work so well, we had to be completely honest and trusting with each other, and noticed that this openness helped us in other relationships as well. We found that on a professional level, the skills and strategies that each of us brought to the job rubbed off on each other making us better skilled at what we do.

How important to you is that time outside of work? How would you benefit by developing a different relationship with your work? Imagine what you would do with your life if you worked only twenty hours a week. If changing your lifestyle is important to you, we are certain that you can manage an alternative career path in this day and age. Doing so is only going to get easier, as more of us prove that success in our personal lives does not preclude success in our working lives. As a wise person once said, no one on their deathbed wishes they had spent more time at the office. We think that work should balance and serve your life, not the other way around.

Cynthia Cunningham and Shelley Murray, contributors to ***Enlightened Power: How Women Are Transforming the Practice of Leadership***, are two women who shared one job as vice presidents in the Global Rate Markets Group at Fleet Boston Financial (formerly Bank Boston). For more information see www.linkage-inc.com.

3. Boomers Corner: Your Next Chapter

An Older Worker's Guide to Getting a Job

Jennie L. Phipps http://www.bankrate.com/brm/ask_editors.asp • Bankrate.com

Who says 65 is the magic age to stop working?

With today's longer life expectancies, few can afford to rest on their laurels--or savings--for twenty or more years. Even if you can stash away enough cash, do you want to completely leave the working world? Employment has rewards beyond the financial.

"Baby boomers have found the fountain of youth," says Susan P. Ascher, president and CEO of The Ascher

Group, which manages contract employees. "They have tons of energy, and they're not going to be willing to quit. If they can play golf three days a week and still be CEO, that's what they're going to want to do."

Just ask Irving Strauss. The 82-year-old is president of Strauss Corporate Communications, a New York City-based company he founded when he was forced to retire at 62 from an investor-relations company.

"I had savings. We could have gotten along on that, but I wanted something better," says Strauss. "I wanted to go out and make another \$100,000 a year, so I did."

Strauss' clients are small firms that value his experience, perspective and wealth of contacts. When he wants to vacation, he does. "I love what I do, and I can't imagine staying home and dying on the vine," Strauss says.

Easing financial and insurance worries

Of course, not every retiree rejoins the work world merely for creative fulfillment. Many stay on the job to take pressure off retirement savings.

Columbus, Ohio, financial planner John E. Sestina offers this illustration. You have a \$250,000 nest egg at retirement, invest it aggressively and it earns a 10-percent return for five years. But instead of living on those earnings, you take a \$25,000 job or a husband and wife each take part-time jobs paying \$12,500 each. At the end of five years, your untouched nest egg will be worth \$402,000. If you then decide to never work another day, your retirement will be more fiscally solid.

Then there's the benefit of employer-provided insurance.

Medicare doesn't kick in until you're 65. If you stop working earlier, you and a spouse or other dependents probably will have to find your own insurance. Bob Hurley, vice president of customer care for eHealthInsurance, says there are lots of plans out there, but even he acknowledges that employer-sponsored plans are often richer and more affordable.

And the most expensive Medicare supplemental insurance plan won't cover high drug costs; the pharmaceutical limit on the most-extensive plan is \$3,000 annually. If you have a chronic condition, Sestina says a policy through an employer or one you pay directly through your own incorporated business (and deduct from your earnings as an expense), will give you much better benefits.

Hurley concurs. He says if you work for a company with more than 20 people, the company's health plan will be the primary payer of claims even if the company requires you to sign up for Medicare. "For most people, that's a much better solution than Medicare alone," Hurley says.

Delaying retirement also could boost your government pension. If you file for Social Security at 62, the earliest you can, you'll get a reduced benefit that will stay reduced for the rest of your life. Waiting until full retirement (age 65 to 67, depending on your birth year) raises the payment 20 percent to 30 percent.

Many people find it makes more sense to have a larger payment during their older years when they are physically less able to work, says Bruce Shobel, an actuary at New York Life Insurance and chair of the Social Insurance Committee of the American Academy of Actuaries .

Post-retirement employment planning

Ready to work but fear post-retirement employment will chain you to a desk for the rest of your golden years? Don't be.

Ascher, a specialist in workforce logistics, predicts more jobs soon will be available for older workers. The numbers support her: There are 77 million baby boomers and only 44 million of the trailing GenXers.

"When all the dust settles and the economy starts to grow again, we'll be facing the first-ever real labor shortage," she says. "By 2004 or 2005, companies will be desperate for skilled workers."

That, she believes, will put older workers, with their histories of being good corporate employees, in positions to set some of the rules. "Some will telecommute. Others will work only part of the year. Some will work part of the week."

"The key to working after retirement is to grab hold of what you wish you could do and just do it," says senior

entrepreneur Strauss.

A recent or a soon-to-be retiree should spend time contemplating what he or she likes to do. A career coach can help, but just talking to longtime business contacts and friends might be just as effective. At this age, who you know is often more important than what you know, says Mallory Tytel, president and CEO of ETP , a behavioral health company in Connecticut.

Financial planner Sestina, author of *Managing to Be Wealthy* , urges his clients to consider starting a business. "We're not talking about General Motors," he says, but small ventures where people have an opportunity to make a little money doing what they like to do. It's also a way to shelter from taxes some of the expenses associated with favorite pastimes.

"If you like photography, shoot a few wedding pictures and write off that new camera. If you like to cook, give a few cooking lessons and write off the job you do remodeling the kitchen," he urges. Of course, your hobby has to eventually produce some money or you'll hear from the Internal Revenue Service.

Getting ready to go back in

But not everyone is cut out for the entrepreneurial life.

Cathy Fyock, an employment strategist and president of Innovative Management Concepts in Louisville, Ky., suggests older workers reconnect with previous employers. The company knows your work and you know the business. Your services maybe welcome part-time or on a project basis.

If you've retired far away from the old corporate stomping ground, check out AARP's annual list , usually published in a fall issue of its Modern Maturity magazine, of the best companies for workers over 50.

Whether you're heading back to your old company or looking for a job with a new employer, you'll need to be ready for today's working world. Ascher, whose company places high-level temporary workers, suggests you:

***Polish your computer skills.** Virtually every job demands at least rudimentary computer knowledge. Within areas of expertise, knowledge of proprietary software is also important. Ascher is frustrated when she tries to place retired executives who have supervised workers without mastering the programs on which businesses rely. Management skills alone might have been enough in their previous situation, but most post-retirement assignments will be more hands-on. If you're going to work in your field post-retirement, she advises you master the technology skills.

*** Build a sophisticated resume.** A post-retirement resume is different than the one that landed you your first or even your most recent job. Concentrate on what you can do, not what you've done. If you're in doubt about what to include, get expert advice.

*** Be flexible.** Give various opportunities a try. If something doesn't work out, so what? Take a breather and try something else. At this age, you have nothing to prove and that's a blessing.

More than money

Finally, there's the compensation question. Retired workers re-entering the workforce generally have more considerations than just a salary amount.

For instance, if your retirement plan is based on your income over the last few years of employment, and many are, don't put yourself back on a payroll. Such a move can affect how much pension money you get. Instead, negotiate an arrangement where you're a self-employed contractor. Since you'll be responsible for your tax payments, make sure you're paid enough to compensate for the employer's share of Social Security that you'll owe.

Fyock advises older workers to be upfront about their compensation needs. "If you need health benefits more than you need money, negotiate that," she says. "If you need a flexible schedule, make that clear."

Jennie L. Phipps is a contributing editor based in Michigan.

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>. She requested that only California government jobs be e mailed to her, and landed a job. This did take several months.

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

Actual events from various interviews:

- * "He wouldn't get out of the chair until I made him an offer."
- * "Pulled out a Polaroid camera and snapped a picture of me. Said he collected photos of everyone who interviewed him."
- * "Candidate asked me if I would put on a suit jacket to ensure that the offer was formal."
- * "Brought his mother into the room for the interview."
- * "Said he wasn't interested in the position because it paid too much."
- * "When I refused to make a job offer, he tried to hit me."
- * "I'm not actually overqualified. My resume is full of lies."

Actual statements from resumes:

- * Job Objective: "?"
- * "Passed the CPA exam the first time. I am considered to be one of the most creative and imaginative accountants."
- * "Hobby. Collecting money."
- * "Memberships: Florida Institute of CPA's; Diner's Club; Elvis Presley Fan Club; American Airlines Admiral's Club."
- * "Subscriptions: The Wall Street Journal; Washington Post; Forbes; Business Week; Playboy and Penthouse (for the articles, of course)."
- * "Reason for leaving: Anxious to improve my personal relationships."
 - "1979-1990 XYZ Corporation. Internal Auditor. Reason for Leaving: Temporary job."

Unusual behavior:

- * Wanted to borrow the fax machine to send out some personal letters.
- * Asked if was OK to call another company to accept the job offer that they had made to her.
- * Applicant indicated that if he wasn't hired, the future of the company would be jeopardized for confidential reasons.
- * Said that if I hire him, we'd soon learn to regret it.
- * When asked about loyalty, showed a tattoo of his girlfriend's name.
- * Can we discuss salary first? My wife has to go shopping.

Excuses:

- * "I thought Halloween was a holiday."
- * "Someone stole one of my shoes on the bus."
- * "The dog got hold of my toupee and hid it somewhere in the basement."
- * "I was late because my digital watch blew a chip."
- * "My husband forgot where he parked the car after he came home from a party last night."
- * "I ate so much during my vacation that none of my clothes would fit me. So I had to spend the morning altering them."

6. Words that Inspire

“Results! Why, man, I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won’t work.”

--Thomas Edison, Inventor

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

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