

Our Newsletter author this week is Debra Feldman, who has contributed articles to the TENG earlier this Spring. Debra is the head of JobWhiz, a career management and transition firm for executives. Sharing her article with our members does not mean that the TENG, Bruner Consulting or I am endorsing her services. This article is intended for those of us who have been in extended transition and serves as a great reality check if you have fallen into a frustrating, unproductive routine of surfing job boards. If you wish to send feedback to Debra or contact her, you will find her Web address and phone number at the end of this article. I am grateful for her contribution. Ed Pospesil

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Speed Pass: Breaking Free from Being In Transition
By Debra Feldman, JobWhiz, the Executive Talent Agent
Swift, Confidential Career Transitions

If you are a senior level executive or professional who has been seeking a new opportunity for an extended period, most likely you need new techniques to increase leads and get your career back on track. Read on to learn proven strategies that will identify your next challenge faster.

There has been much written about individuals who find themselves unprepared to face a long and difficult job search process, something that is just about par for the course in today's environment. Experts provide pointers to sharpen up resume content and appearance. Techies address how to tweak the online job boards to improve an individual's chances of being selected for a specific posting. Others provide advice on how to network, where to network and when to connect. Your friends, family and associates all give well intentioned advice. What should you do first? Who has the best method to expedite your campaign and get the right results for you?

Actually, there are a number of ways to enhance your job search effectiveness. But with limited time and resources, you want to be efficient and choose to implement the ones that will deliver the biggest bang for your efforts. Most importantly, you have to have a strong, solid job search campaign strategy to steer yourself to your next career opportunity. The necessity of the right approach executed persistently cannot be over emphasized. Your focus should be on connecting with the right people who can lead you to the kind of opportunities that you want and where you are needed and appreciated.

While developing a network is a big investment, there is a huge payoff because the personal connections made should continue to be among your regular contacts and provide new career opportunities in the future as long as you stay in touch and exchange leads and information with those in your newly created purposeful network. Purposeful? Yes! Don't just chatter with anyone remotely involved in your field. Rather, find out who needs to know about you and whom you need to know and make it a priority to meet and share mutual interests, build up a relationship and learn to trust one another. Who are these people? Those affiliated with your target employers, those recognized and respected and thus, well connected themselves and those to whom others go to for a recommendation when they need new talent.

Take this encouraging thought behind your purposeful networking investment: once you have successfully mastered how to seek out a new job through purposefully targeting your networking interactions and developed a business network to facilitate your transition, your next job hunting experience will not be the same shock, of the same intensity, of the same duration again. Why? Because you will have the appropriate contacts in place to assist you in your search arranging introductions and giving you leads on new positions before they are advertised; you will have already established yourself as a member of the inner circle. For your efforts developing your purposeful network, not only will you have landed a new job through these contacts, but you also will have mastered the most effective job search method, networking.

While it was terrific that you had previously been recruited for, promoted into or recommended for new job opportunities in your career (up until when you found yourself spending too much time in transition,) you now have the tools and resources to prevent this from reoccurring. Keep networking even when you are happily employed!

We all learn from experience and losing a job and having to find a new one, is very much a learning opportunity. To accelerate your campaign, find the right help and follow through on their recommendations, even if this means abandoning some old ideas that seem easier. One thing for sure, you can't be a passive candidate and progress your campaign swiftly to a successful landing. Today's highly competitive, wired environment demands even more personal outreach to overcome the tendency to rely on mouse clicks alone to magically produce a new job. It's so seductive to think that the Internet is going to replace human interaction, but as long as human chemistry and personal relationships influence hiring decisions, you have to get your toe into the right doors actively seeking out your next position.

To get you started on the right foot, apply these principles.

1. The job search should concentrate on defining prospective employers' needs and matching what skills and talents you have to meet these specifications rather than focusing on what past accomplishments may or may not be interesting to employers. In other words, shift from thinking about all that you can and want to do for a company to what unmet needs they have that you can fill. The company may not have already identified these as lacking, but your pitch is to solve their outstanding challenges to instantly confer a value on your abilities. Switch from a candidate-centered strategy to one that reflects the employer's concerns first.
2. Don't be wishy washy about your objective. While a specific goal narrows the possibilities, it also presents you as a very desirable expert to a specific market. You lose more opportunities trying to be all things than narrowing your focus which makes it easier for an employer to rule you in. Rather than saying you can do it all, on both your written credentials and inperson, rely on your greatest strengths to attract an employer's attention. Once your foot is in the door, you can always expand on the array of talents you bring to their organization. With so many potential candidates, employers are very choosy, seeking exclusively round pegs for their round holes. If you fall outside these parameters, you are likely to

- be overlooked. Make yourself into a simple, perfect fit, at least on paper and on initial introduction.
3. If you are spending inordinate hours on the computer, searching, reading, perusing online job boards, STOP! If you must, choose one or two of the most reputable jobsites, put your best submission up there and then force yourself to start interacting with as many individuals as you can to share your goal of connecting with specific employers that you want to work for. It's relationships that breed job offers, not shuffling papers.
 4. How can you determine who you should introduce yourself to in order to further your campaign objectives? Company websites are treasure troves of information, press releases contain many insights into news and developments, and key word searches can uncover leads. Once you connect to a new business contact, make it your goal to have them refer you to at least two others you should meet. This will exponentially increase your network quickly producing the high level of human interaction you've been missing up to now.
 5. Don't wait for a company to issue a requisition to hire someone like you. Be proactive. Stress the hidden or unadvertised job market where over 80% of new hires sourced their jobs in study after study after study reviewed. How can you create a job for yourself? First select a handful of companies that you want to work for, then make sure that these businesses need you, revise the list and weed out any companies that are unlikely to recognize your value, prepare a presentation based on research you perform illustrating that you understand how to find solutions to their challenges—you can increase revenues, tweak profit margins or avoid/reduce expenses. Be willing to volunteer to prove you can do a great job for them. Structure a project that highlights your skills and you get to make a place for yourself or you bump out someone who is underperforming or you allow the management to restructure without taking as big a risk.
 6. Be flexible. You can't eat a title. This may not be your final destination but it could be a stepping stone to a great new position, a chance to learn and grow. Be practical. Are you better off eating into savings or taking something in the interim to stop the bleeding? Getting financial relief is important; it can permit you to think rationally about your options without the stress of money worries. Something is better than nothing, especially if you can use some of the new income to invest in reliable career management services or improving your skills.

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Debra Feldman, JobWhiz is the original and premier career management resource ("reverse recruiter") for senior executives. Debra makes personal introductions to decision makers creating new opportunities just for clients in the unadvertised, or hidden job market. Your personal executive talent agent connects you directly with hiring managers at high potential target employers to identify your next career challenge in the shortest possible time. Bypass gatekeepers, eliminate cold calling, penetrate computerized screens, and command meaningful interviews where you want to work. Have JobWhiz accelerate your job search

immediately using 100% successful expert techniques customized to relentlessly support daily, consistent campaign progress. Turn stress into success! Contact [Debra Feldman](#) at www.JobWhiz.com

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