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Fishing with a Net

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Greg combines his leadership training from General Electric with his passion for coaching, training and mentoring to inspire executives to discover their true career value, unlock their passion, and communicate their competencies to sharpen their leadership skills, improve their performance and create the professional growth they desire.

Greg has addressed many TENG and FENG Chapters as well as other professional groups throughout the Northeast.

This newsletter contains a true story that demonstrates the importance of communicating your specific value, of differentiating yourself; and the risk of blending in with the herd, of letting the reader of your resume infer your value. Read. Reflect. Enjoy.

Greg Ranney

In a session with Bob, I finished describing the importance of focusing his search on the value he adds and targeting what he would love to do rather than all the things he can do. His eyes lit up. He could barely contain himself.

"Exactly!" Bob exclaimed. "That's exactly what happened to me last month. I saw a posting that was a perfect fit for me, and I for it. I just couldn't believe it."

He submitted his cover letter and resume and waited for the call he knew he would get. When the call came, and it did come, it was not at all what he had expected. The hiring manager, Rick, introduced himself, but what he said next stunned Bob.

"We received over 1000 resumes for this position. I selected 5 and yours." Rick told Bob.

For Bob, the excitement was building. His heart was racing. "This is it," he thought, "I know it." Then came the other shoe.

Rick continued, "I was intrigued by the breadth of experience in your resume, but I don't think you have enough of the specific experience we are looking for."

Panic set in! Bob was in shock! “But,” he exclaimed, “that’s exactly what I do, what I have always done! It’s what I love to do!”

Over the next 20 minutes, Bob did what his resume had not. He proceeded to share with Rick specific examples of the exact experience he was looking for. They had a dialogue that led to the final round of interviews.

Bob then realized his lesson learned. The revelation was that in his desire to not miss any potential opportunity, to be all things to all people, he had, in fact, made himself indistinguishable, undifferentiated and invisible to his perfect hiring manager and for his perfect position. Instead of creating a competitive advantage for himself by focusing on the value he adds and how he adds it--what differentiates him from others--he worked really hard to remove all differentiation, to blend in completely, and become one of the herd.

“In my desire not to miss a single potential ‘can do’ opportunity, I almost missed the one that I would love to do.” Bob stated with confidence.

“Luckily, I received a call, but it was a call intended to confirm the hiring manager’s initial instinct to reject me, not intended to include me.” Bob was able to persuade Rick that he was a great fit and that he could add value to Rick’s organization. “I wonder how many other times I was passed by, rejected, because my value was not obvious in my resume, because I did not stand out, because I failed to differentiate myself.”

Bob vowed then and there, “Never again!”

For a minute we just sat there. Bob knew he had been fortunate in that he got a call that allowed him a second chance to convey his true value. But even Bob knew he couldn’t count on this type of luck to help him get the job he really wants.

Don’t make the same mistake Bob did of trying to be all things to all people. Don’t make the mistake of failing to differentiate yourself, of not focusing on the value you add. If you are having trouble articulating your value, get help. It is one of the most important steps you can take in your search.

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Quote for the Day:

"I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure -- which is: Try to please everybody." -- Herbert Swope

Great quote. Remember that no one does what you do the way you do it better than you. What is it?

Suggested Reading:

The Power of Intention by Dr. Wayne Dyer. A wonderful read that creates an awareness of the power we all have when we focus our intentions on what we want. Enjoy.

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