

SO YOU WANT A MOVE TO GREENER PASTURES? *Executive Job Search*

By Carolyn Broomfield, CRW, CEIC
First Place Resumes

Job search is challenging, with great rewards for those with get-up-and-go.

Be prepared to be in for six months or more to secure the position you want. Statistics show that it takes a month for every \$10k of earnings.

Whether you're currently employed or unemployed, or not yet ready to move to greener pastures, you need to work the system. In the changing 21st century economy you must constantly be in tune with the market and what you can offer.

Around 80-85% of executive positions are in the hidden job market - jobs and employment opportunities not advertised and available only through networking and cold-calling. So...network, network, network.

Research Yourself

To receive an offer of employment, you must be the best person to satisfy a company's stated need. You must also know how to market yourself effectively.

Some questions to ask yourself:

- Do you honestly know your top five strengths? Can you articulate these convincingly to an employer?
- Are you listed on the largest job boards?
- Is your resume current, professionally produced and tailored to the job? Will it pass the 15-30-second visual by a hiring manager? Do you carry your resume and business cards with you always?
- Is your networking contact list current and effective?
- Can you confidently and honestly add value to your target company?

Capitalize on your uniqueness: skills, experience and personal attributes that will benefit an employer. Focus on what you can offer rather than your own career goals.

Your Resume

An employer spends no more than 30 seconds scanning your resume - unless it has immediate impact. It's one of the most important documents of your working life. Seriously consider hiring a Certified Resume Writer – not simply a typing service – to produce a resume and associated documents, tailored to the job, which will win you interviews, job offers and more money. Some resume companies offer to email your resume to thousands of recruiters.

- Don't send unsolicited resumes.
- Build rapport with decision makers. When cold-calling a company, make your approach personal. Who is the hiring manager? Make personal contact before sending your resume.
- Track all your resume submissions as well as contacts made with hiring managers.

Research Your Industry and Job

- What industry appeals? Research those of interest. Network with people familiar with the industry.
- What type of job are you pitching at? Can you sell your skills to the employer? Will the job take you where you want to go?
- What companies attract you? Tap into your network; ask questions. Peruse company websites for a wealth of information about performance and goals to help you determine target businesses. What size company interests you?

Once you know the industry and type of job you are seeking think about these points:

- Will you have to relocate?
- Is your target industry in expansion or decline?
- Is your target job a high-demand occupation?
- Are formal qualifications required, and if so can you deliver?
- Are these jobs normally filled by recruitment agencies or directly by the companies?

Reading employment sections of major newspapers will give you a good idea of this information.

Networking

Your personal contact list is a vital tool in your job search. It's statistically proven that most jobs are secured through networking.

Building long-term relationships with like-minded executives and strategic alliances with leading recruiters is the best way to find out about the best opportunities.

Headhunters specialize in sourcing and placing high-caliber individuals. They don't advertise positions nor refer to databases of candidates. Their methods are based on researching the top performers and most successful employees in given industries. There are free online directories of headhunters.

- Prepare your list of personal contacts, including past and present colleagues, recruiters, sporting partners, friends, family, suppliers, clients and previous employers.
- Explore your contacts. Don't ask a contact directly about a job. Instead, approach them for information and advice, along the lines of "do you know anyone in xyz industry?" "I'm looking for a job in xyz company; do you know anyone who works there?"
- Expand your network; join professional organizations. Attend business events, seminars, conferences and after-hour meetings to broaden your contact base - great opportunities for informally meeting people working in your industry of interest.
- At trade shows get a feel for a company's culture and products, and the opportunity to chat with company representatives.
- Get your name out there. Many professional organizations like chambers of commerce give awards. Research local awards. Get a professional 'buddy', a client or business associate, to nominate you for an award.
- Follow up referrals, acting always with integrity. You are putting your reputation, and the referrer's, on the line. Successful networkers consistently follow up contacts while maintaining a strong code of ethics.
- Track your networking efforts:

- Company name
 - Contact name and details
 - Date of contact
 - Position sought or reason for contact
 - Outcome
 - Next step
 - Follow-up date
- Collect business cards. To help remember what you talked about, write the organization, date and other relevant information on the back of the card – then follow up!

Some Final Tips

- Be proactive. The job-seeking market is fiercely competitive. Don't wait for career moves to be forced on you. Keep abreast of changes in your industry and your career.
- Use the experts:
 - Invest in a career coach to take the stress out of job search.
 - Hire a Certified Resume Writer. Keep your resume constantly up to date, whether or not you 'need' it right now.
 - Partner with an executive placement agency to package you as a marketable 'product', and decrease your time in the marketplace with a carefully devised tactical plan.
- Receptionists and secretaries are your first point of contact in the company. Be nice to them!
- Send a thank you note to anyone who helped you. It can be as simple as an appreciatively-worded email.

Carolyn Broomfield, founder and CEO of First Place Résumés in Queensland, Australia, is an Australian Representative of the international organization Professional Résumé Writing and Research Association (PRWRA), and one of just seven Australian résumé writers with Certified Résumé Writer accreditation. Carolyn is also a Certified Employment Interview Consultant. She can be reached via phone at +61 7.5578.2433 or by email at info@firstplaceresumes.com.