

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT "YOU!" ***Redefining your career focus for greater success***

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*"I'd like an office with a view.
I'd like a bonus scheme; maybe some company shares, and
of course, medical insurance would be a must!
Did I mention I wouldn't even get out of my chair unless they offered me an increase of at
least \$10K?"*

If you think this checklist of job searching has a familiar ring to it, then you're right. No doubt you have either said it yourself or heard a friend espouse much the same. Getting your personal preferences straight in your mind, and planning your short-, medium-, and long-term career needs are perfectly valid exercises; just as legitimate as determining the type of role that suits your brand of talents, where in the hierarchy you want to sit, and where geographically you would be most comfortable working.

Introspective planning and career strategizing are important, but remember the criticality of balancing this with a wider view. Maturity, flexibility and above all a willingness to make the partnership between you and your employer a winning one, will all come into play.

Once your big picture needs are settled internally, you will need to give some serious thought to the following:

1. What are you going to give in return for the office with a view, bonus scheme, medical insurance and extra money? Are you worth it?
2. What are you going to do to prove it?

Only when you have analyzed those crucial questions carefully, will you be ready to begin your job search in earnest. By determining your value before you start searching, you will be infinitely more persuasive in communicating it in your résumé, and at interview. Your realistic acknowledgement of your true professional and personal worth will instill in the prospective employer the confidence that you can, and will deliver a solid return on their investment in your services.

So the focus will switch from "what I want" to "what I can offer" and in doing so, will provide greater clarity for you and for your next employer.

We have all heard those disastrous interview stories where the candidate, when asked if he or she has any questions, responds with "How many days sick leave do I get?" While most of us would prefer to see these faux pas as isolated cases, the reality is that most people tend to say something similarly inappropriate. And why? Because they are unprepared. Unprepared to articulate their talents; unprepared in terms of their research into the company they are talking with and in terms of job search growth; unprepared to attend that interview as they have not progressed past their own career strategizing phase, nor investigated in detail what value they offer.

Redefining your sense of self and redirecting it towards your next employer's expectations can bring significant rewards and can be applied using the job seeking strategy of S.E.A.R.C.H.

Seek information from your centre of influence; your trusted network of friends, and current supervisors. Revisit recent performance evaluations and job descriptions and look at your role critically.

Evaluate your talents in detail. Where do you excel, and what can you take from your experiences that will help your next employer achieve their goals? Know yourself backwards; learn to articulate your strengths in terms of the employer's philosophy.

Ask not what your company can do for you, but what you can do for the company. (Borrowed and slightly massaged from the well-known original, but just as valid for the job-seeker!)

Research. Research companies. How will your talents fit with the company philosophy, and long-term goals? Articulating and matching your talents in your résumé, networking communications, or during interview will indicate your level of maturity, and your willingness to contribute to that team philosophy.

Confidence. Not everyone is a salesman and you don't have to be brash and aggressive. Confidence means you believe in yourself, believe in your talents, and have the ability to speak honestly of them without boasting.

Honesty. Honesty with yourself and with the people who are willing to invest their time, money and considerable emotional and professional resources in your services. To be dishonest about your strengths and abilities, your background, experience or education speaks volumes about your integrity, and threatens exposure – one day, if not immediately.

S.E.A.R.C.H. provides the strategy; now it is up to you to confront the value of your professional strengths, and communicate them to match your next employer's needs.

Are you worth that increase? That end-of-year bonus?

You know you are! And YOU can prove it!

Gayle Howard was the first Australian to be awarded three resume writing certifications as a Certified Professional Resume Writer (CPRW), Certified Resume Writer (CRW), and Certified Expert Resume Writer. She is also a Credentialed Career Master (CCM) and a Certified Web Portfolio Practitioner. Her work has been featured in more than 20 career books internationally and she is the author of the e-Book "PS You Need a Resume!". You can contact her via email at getinterviews@topmargin.com or by phone at 61 3 9726 6694.