

August 31, 2005

Welcome. Paul Bush here—resume writer extraordinaire (or at least I’d like to think so). If we haven’t been in touch in a while, you may be interested to know that thanks to the support of my many clients, effective the first of this year I’ve gone full time with my business. Translation: I’ve given up my day job to devote my energy fully to resume work and supporting clients in transition.

My purpose in creating this e-newsletter is to share with you my insight and perceptions on job search, resumes and the Rochester market. With your approval, I will be writing regularly to pass along information of value in managing your career. So, welcome to the first edition. I am open to suggestions for a good title.

The new me. For those of you who don’t know, RochesterResume.com is the “rebranded” form of the resume business I’ve operated for more than a decade under my own name. Visit my Web site at www.RochesterResume.com for timely and up-to-date career management and resume information.

The Rochester market...all is not lost. Client after client remarks how “tight” things are in Rochester, or at least the perception that opportunities are limited. It’s tough not to agree when the papers are filled with reports of company layoffs (think Valeo, Kodak, JP Morgan Chase and others) and other sad stories. Truthfully, though, many of my clients have gotten jobs lately—good jobs. I like to remind clients that the unfortunate reality of job search today is that before you can succeed, you have to suffer a bit. By that I mean, endure the stress and strain of conducting a job search. I know this is not music to most ears, but it’s the truth and with time and contacts I have yet to have a client fail to reach his or her goals. The best way to minimize the impacts is through effective marketing...

Marketing 101. The art and science of resume writing has changed considerably in just the last ten years. Years ago, an IT person could hand in a brain dump on copy paper and have three offers plus a signing bonus in 48 hours. Today, it’s all about strategic marketing and candidates need to be more market-driven and employer-focused than ever before in presenting their qualifications.

In just the last few years, I’ve changed my approach and format considerably. Back in the day, I would lead off resumes with a couple of good adjectives, “Top Producer” or “Marketing Savvy” as the headline. Today, that’s not enough. Today, I write a headline that tells prospective employers exactly what they need to know about the candidate’s “value proposition” or competitive offering in the marketplace. For example, “Experienced customer/sales support, major account and operations manager seeking challenging new opportunity with client-driven organization.” How effective is the headline on your resume?

If you are applying for jobs now and sending out the standard name, rank and serial number resume, you’re selling yourself short and perhaps missing opportunities. A little marketing goes a long way...

Career transition planning. Nice sounding buzzword, right? Smart jobholders know that there’s no such thing as lifetime employment and being prepared for the inevitable career blips on the radar screen of life is essential to prospering in today’s economy.

What does career transition planning mean? It means *purposefully* planning your career, not just reacting to what comes your way. It means maintaining accurate records of your achievements in your jobs so that you can include them on your resume. It means keeping your skills up to date. It means building and maintaining a network of contacts within your profession—people you can count on when the going gets tough. Trust me when I say there is no cry as desperate as the cry of the recently downsized, outsourced or otherwise made redundant employee who has NOT given any thought in advance to career planning.

That's why I've partnered with the best Rochester-based executive coach and career navigation firm. **Predictive Insights** does amazing work to help clients identify their core skills, mount an effective job search and network their way to interviews. This is just one more value-added referral my company offers today that we didn't just a few years ago.

Template cover letters: There's no such thing! More and more jobseekers understand the value of a good cover letter. Unfortunately, too many still think that the best cover letter is a template letter. In truth, there's no such thing as a template cover letter. Effective cover letters customize the resume to the job opportunity. Let me repeat this. Effective cover letters give the reader important information about the candidate relative to a particular job posting. Think about it. When you're reading your mail, how responsive are you to a form letter versus a personalized letter written just for you? Need I say more?

Working with recruiters. Recruiters are an important weapon in your arsenal, but only if you know which recruiters to choose and how recruiters work. So many times clients will express frustration with recruiters. I hear, "I couldn't get the recruiter to return my call." Recruiters are busy people. A good recruiter receives dozens of phone calls a day from job seekers all asking the same question. Recruiters work for companies not candidates, so cold calling a recruiter may not get any response.

With that said, I have developed a network of recruiters with whom I work closely. They know me and I know them. Therefore, I send them only the candidates that might be a fit for the niche they serve. Some of them call me when they have openings to fill and are looking for specific candidates.

How best to work with a recruiter? First, make sure you are a fit for the recruiter's niche. Establish a relationship. Suggest coffee or a lunch—lay the foundation for a long-term connection. Keep in touch and be patient. My most successful candidates and recruiters work well together because they have a relationship. So, when an opportunity arises, the recruiter has an awareness of who's out there. Not sure which recruiter may be best for you? Call my office and I'll see what I can do.

Special offer. If you haven't updated your resume in a while, it may be time to consider doing so. To take some of the pain out of the process, for the month of September I am offering returning clients \$10.00 off a resume update. We can even do it by phone if you're time pressed. Just mention this letter when you call to schedule your appointment and I will take \$10.00 off the bill.

Your privacy. I respect your privacy and, as always, any information you place with me is confidential. To be removed from this mailing list, send an e-mail to paul@rochesterresume.com with the word "Delete" in the subject line. To add friends or associates to this mailing list, send an e-mail to paul@rochesterresume.com with the word "Add" in the subject line and the e-mail addresses in the body of the message. I'll take care of the rest. Thanks.