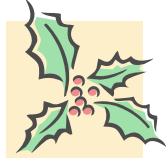




Career-Focused Insight for Forward-Focused Professionals

for the Holiday Season

December 2006



HAPPY HOLIDAYS. Wishing you a joyous Holiday Season from Paul and Kathleen. With Christmas and the New Year just around the corner, the last thing on most job seekers' minds is job search, hence the reason for the timing of this newsletter. As much as our goal in writing is to provide tools and tips, we are also very aware of the importance of providing a bit of motivation as a form of holiday cheer. Every day we work with clients in transition who need a jump start on their job search. What better time than the holidays when it's particularly difficult to stay focused?

Career Management 101. This should be a course taught as a senior seminar in every college in the land. Each day, thousands of highly skilled, talented and marketable candidates are forced to face the unpleasant reality that economic changes in the marketplace require them to embrace reinvention—a frightening prospect to some!

Our purpose for this e-newsletter is to share insight and perceptions on career management, job search, resumes and the Rochester market. Before we launch into our message, if you would prefer not to receive mail from us, e-mail paul@rochesterresume.com or kpringle@rochester.rr.com with the word "Delete" in the subject line and your name will be removed from the mailing list.

Failing to plan. Nearly every professional we see comes to us with the same story. Most know what they want, though they lack clarity at articulating their vision. *Even the most savvy, intelligent, career-agile candidates have no idea how to develop a job-search plan.* They buy books with clever titles, go online looking for tools or exercise their trigger finger on Internet job sites hitting "send" every time they see an inspiring job posting. Nice, but it's not a strategy or a plan.

The cold, hard reality...

➤ **Winging it doesn't work.** You take chances, risk missing once-in-a-lifetime opportunities and waste time. We frequently observe (with some amusement) the feedback we get from clients. It would seem that golfing buddies, old English teachers and anyone who has ever gotten a job that looks better than what the job seeker has currently are widely considered impeccable sources of direction for those in transition. **COLD HARD REALITY: BITS AND PIECES OF ADVICE ARE ONLY AS GOOD AS THE GIVER, AND OFTEN TURN OUT TO BE BAD OR WRONG. WHAT MAKES A GRAMMER EXPERT A GOOD SOURCE OF ADVICE ON PERSONAL MARKETING AND CAREER NAVIGATION? CONSIDER THE SOURCE.**

➤ **Get your head together.** You can't be prepared to effectively develop a multi-pronged job search strategy, write your resume and go on interviews if you are in a poor state of mind...angry, frustrated, scared or depressed. Give yourself time to grieve, recognize that this whole experience is a process (and not one that is pleasant). Accept that this isn't going to go the way you think. You're going to experience disappointment and get your feelings hurt. **COLD HARD REALITY: IT'S OKAY TO FEEL BAD, BUT NOT WHEN IT RISKS AFFECTING YOUR GO-FORWARD STRATEGY OR YOUR BANK ACCOUNT. MOVE ON. GET HELP.**

➤ **Map your strategy.** If your strategy consists of a brain dump on paper of everything you have ever done professionally, hanging out in networking groups and spending your days and nights online waiting for that one right opportunity to pop up, then you are likely to be disappointed as the weeks turn into months. **COLD HARD REALITY: A JOB SEARCH STRATEGY IS DIVER-**

SIFIED AND INTEGRATED ACROSS MULTIPLE MEDIUMS. RESUMES SHOULD BE OBJECTIVE, COMPETITIVE, PROMOTIONAL MARKETING TOOLS. IF YOU'RE STUCK, LACKING IN OBJECTIVITY OR STRUGGLING WITH A PLAN, GET HELP.

Now, the opportunity...

⇒ **Stand and deliver.** Get a plan. Chances are the best work you've done in your career came about as a result of following a plan. Think back to your highest and best professional achievements. In all likelihood, they came about as a result of good planning.

Step 1: Define the parameters. Determine the type of job you want, what it's called, where it's located and the skills and core competencies required.

Step 2: Develop a plan of attack. By this, we mean three (yes, three) strategies, paths or approaches you will employ to mount your campaign and then prioritize.

Step 3: Understand your value. Determine what you have to offer. In other words, get your message down pat. If you are even the slightest bit unclear, get clear *before* hitting the streets.

Step 4: Do your homework. Learn about the job, the market, the industry, etc. Hardly a week goes by without a well-intended professional talking to us about how he or she wants a career in pharmaceutical (or even better, medical device) sales. The problem is that Mr. or Ms. Well-Intended hasn't understood the real-world competencies that need to be demonstrated to *earn* the title.

⇒ Get the tools of the trade.

Tool #1: Your resume. Career management guru, Ross Macpherson put it best: "An amateurish, home-made resume is not good enough! ...If it isn't fantastic, it just isn't good enough. It's that simple." He makes a very interesting point: Imagine if world-class companies like Coca Cola or The Gap relied on advertising done by amateurs. Successful companies know that if they are going to put their best foot forward and expect to get attention, they need to have the most polished and professional materials available. Savvy job seekers know that a resume that "looks good" on paper, but is lacking in strategic content is potentially deadly.

Tool #2: Your pitch and presentation. Remember, back at the beginning we talked about the value of a course entitled, "Career Management 101?" More than half the syllabus would be dedicated to *knowing* your value in the market and knowing how to present and promote it. Skills *don't* get jobs. Skills are a lot like *features* where the *benefits* have not been presented. Learning to promote your *value* is crucial in today's super-competitive employment marketplace. Knowing how to *negotiate* your value in an interview is equally important.

The career management acid test

Is your resume a dynamic, self-promotional document that truly tells your story to its maximum advantage and markets you effectively in absentia? Are you sending *transmittal* letters as cover letters? By that we mean, "Enclosed please find..." letters. If so, you are missing a golden opportunity to customize your candidacy to the job and quite possibly setting yourself up to fail.

Are you clear on your value in the marketplace? How astute to the competition are you? Are you confident that you won't sell yourself short in the offer negotiation? Do you know how to "dollarize" your value? Are your interview skills poised and polished? If you haven't done it in a while, chances are you are a little rusty. A lot has changed in the last ten years. Don't wing it!

Give the gift of career navigation this holiday season. Do you know someone who could be happier in their career or is not getting the job search results he or she deserves? The gift of career navigation coaching and/or a resume is truly a gift that keeps on giving. You can purchase a coaching service or resume gift certificate in any amount to be used toward any coaching program or resume.



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