

10 Tips for Job Hunters

The professional association for an industry recently asked me to speak at a conference giving their members tips and hints on job hunting. Over the years, I've helped quite a few coaching clients find new roles - the Chair of the association was one. While my approach is quite tough, it gets results, so I hope you'll find these notes helpful.

1 Decide what you really want to do

Most of us stay in jobs for far longer than we want to, so when we eventually decide to move it is well worth considering whether we want a complete change or just a new employer. Allow yourself time to dream - recall fantasies that you had when you were a kid. What did you imagine you would do when you were at school? And when you were at college or university? Go a bit deeper than the job title - what did the fantasy represent - most embrace aspects of a lifestyle too.

2 Find out all you can about that 'market'

Whether you plan on staying in your present one or might be tempted to try something you're more passionate about you need to understand that "market". Prepare a briefing document - maybe 2 sides of A4 - highlighting key trends, emerging issues, the management challenges and new opportunities. Make sure that it's clear it's a draft. This information will prove invaluable in different ways.

3 Plan a transition strategy - and write it down

To leap from being a media sales person to brain surgeon won't happen overnight. Those people who successfully change career usually plan ahead and make the transition through a small number of thought through steps.

4 Build a "mini-database" for your network - for phone, mail and email

Between 80% and 90% of jobs are found by networking and are never advertised. There are plenty of simple software solutions to achieve this. The number of contacts will depend on how well you networked in the past and how "hot" a proposition you are! This is not just for your initial contacts but to add people they refer you on to. A good senior manager will probably have 60 to 80 initial leads.

5 Collate your career information

Pull together all your career related information in one place - in a folder. Have a page for education, one for jobs, one for voluntary work and one for interests. Keep a copy there of all degrees, diplomas, and letters of recommendation. Don't confuse collation with the design of your CV.

6 Produce your "brochure" CV

Suppose that you expect a salary of £50,000. To an employer the "costs of employment" will be roughly 1.5 times this. They'll expect a minimum of 3 years service, so they're committing to spend £225,000. Visit an estate agent and get details of properties of that value - their "brochures" are models for the quality, style and level of detail for your CV!

7 Prepare a 3 part campaign

Never write once to someone. Devise a 3-part mailing. (1) says who referred you, that you're in the job market, that your CV will follow, and you hope they'll meet you. (2) refers to (1), summarizes the conclusions from your CV, says you'd like to meet in the hope they can refer you to "interested" people. (3) refers to (2), says you'll call on Monday to make an appointment. See my website for examples.

8 Make the telephone follow-up and follow-up the follow-ups

ALWAYS make a follow-up call to (3) when you said you would. If they're not available - persist. When someone gives you some names, ALWAYS write to those people with a 3 part campaign. ALWAYS keep the "referrer" informed even if this particular name didn't lead anywhere.

9 Always ask for ideas and contacts never a job

REMEMBER you are never looking for a job per se, but "networking" in the hope they might know "one or two" people who might be interested. "I always find it's easier to help someone when I've met them. So I hoped you might spare me a few minutes to put a face to a name."

10 Always keep in touch and return the favour

A network should last you for most of your career. Keep your database up to date. Make contact by email, telephone or post at least once every six months - leaving it any longer is effectively saying they're only someone you're trying to use! Check out my guide to Networking for ten tips on this important skill. Above all remember that the days of the "old school tie" and "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" are long gone - EVERYONE needs a network and those who succeed give 100 small favours in return for one big one back!

For details of my leadership coaching, public speaking and other activities, please check out my website:

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or telephone me on 07785 222380.

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Leadership Coaching

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Graham Wilson

For the last 17 years, I've worked with the leaders of organisations, and their people, helping create a vision of what their world could be like, and then helping them to achieve it.

Believing in the enormous potential that people have I love to see them discover and tap into this in every aspect of their life.

Whilst both a futurist and strategist, my work has its roots in organisation development and is shaped by my training as a psychotherapist, sports coach, and minister.

You can read more about my background, leadership roles and my books on my website:

www.grahamwilson.org

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A 21st Century Guide to
Career Success
for Today's Executives

Leadership Coaching

I meet clients at a variety of locations around the country, including London, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands. Appointments can be made to suit your timetable - many clients preferring to meet outside their core working hours.

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