

A Resume For Today

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The 5 Pillars of an Executive Job Search

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1. Traditional Networking

- a. Select and **use a contact management system**: Outlook, JibberJobber, your preferred smart phone app, etc. Having a system will help you remember when you talked with a contact, the content of the discussion, and when you need to check in again.
- b. If you are not conducting a confidential job search, **tell all the people you know** from every part of your life: relatives, church, country club, professional association, alumni groups, sports, classes, etc. Alumni groups can be especially helpful. If you are in a confidential job search, be very selective about whom you confide in, and use your judgment about applying the methods listed below.
- c. Leverage email, phone calls, breakfast/lunch/coffee, or updates through LinkedIn to let your contacts know you're looking. **Don't ask your contacts for their help getting you a job!** People tend to pull back when you do. Instead, tell them you want to network or talk about the company's culture or industry trends with them and/or the people whose names they give you.
- d. Be sure to tell your contacts **specifically how they can be helpful** to you. For instance, ask for "the names of two people who work for tech companies in the Boston area," or "two people who are managers at one of the top hospitals or healthcare organizations in Boston," or "two people who work at [Name of Organization]."

2. Social Networking

- a. Use social media – **LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter** – or one of your other organizations to connect with **people you don't know**, but who may work inside of one of your target companies. Ask them for 5-10 minutes of their time to talk about their company's culture or trends in the industry (**people are much more willing to talk if they don't think you want them to find you a job!**). If you develop rapport, suggest that they hand your resume to the likely hiring authority for your type of job – not HR (human resources). Employee referrals result in a good percentage of hidden job hires (**one out of every 10!**) as compared to applicants from the outside (one out

of 100). Employees will most likely be motivated to refer you because they usually get a bonus if their referral is ultimately hired. You can also ask for two more names as described above and continue to build out the network of people who know about you. If you follow the recommendations in this eGuide, you will **exponentially grow your network** and increase the chances of your hearing about one of the valuable positions in the hidden job market. The competition for jobs in **the hidden job market** is less stiff than in the published job market (job boards).

- b. Be sure to keep adding to your contact list and include notes in your contact manager about what you discussed, when to contact them next, and what other names they gave you. **Stay in touch regularly!** Once a month is a reasonable time between phone calls or emails to update contacts on your progress.
- c. Grow your LinkedIn (LI) connections until you have **500+**. **The more the better!** LinkedIn has changed its raison d'être from recommending that you connect only with people you know and trust to designing it as a premier networking tool for connecting beyond your known connections. The more connections you have, the greater are the chances that a recruiter will be able to find you in a search. The more connections you have, the more likely it is that someone who works for your target company will be in your network (and they can refer you in from the inside).
- d. Contact **connections in your target companies** and follow methodology described above (2).
- e. Join LI Groups where your target companies and their employees are active. Contribute to the conversation to **get on their radar**.
- f. Publish frequent updates, blogs, brief comments etc. on your LinkedIn profile so your network knows what you are thinking about. Go into Privacy/Settings and set it so that your contacts can see your updates. **This keeps you top of mind**. Some candidates have been known to set up a specific group of personal contacts, a subset of their connections, and keep them updated regularly on the progress of their job search.
- g. Follow **thought leaders** in your industry/function on Twitter. Set up a brand profile and begin by re-tweeting interesting posts, with a few words of commentary by you.
- h. Search for employees including managers in your target company on LinkedIn. Do the same with Twitter: follow them, retweet their tweets, and get on their radar. Connect through Facebook, etc.
- i. Find your target companies on their Facebook pages and "like" them (recruiters say this is the best way to get their attention). Comment on their news or blogs.
- j. Make comments on blogs written by thought leaders in your industry/function/target companies. Then tweet about it. Find top blogs by going into sites like Feedly.com. Just fill in the search bar with keywords for your industry/function/target companies. Top blogs will come up and you can check on them daily or weekly, thus **staying up to speed with what's current** in the industry.

3. Direct Mail Campaign

- a. Build a **company list**: use LinkedIn's advanced company search to identify companies that match your requirements as to location, size, industry, etc.
- b. Select anywhere from 15 to 1000 companies to start.

- c. At the same time, set up **Google alerts** for your target companies, so that you are notified about the company's changes. Then you'll be up to speed on their new initiatives, M&A (merger & acquisition) activity, restructuring, new hires, etc. You can leverage this information to get and ace interviews.
- d. Mail them your VPL – **Value Proposition Letter** – and keep a record of companies you've mailed. Address it to the hiring manager for your position (not HR). Send it UPS overnight or in a regular business envelope. This is an **amazingly effective method! Don't include your resume.** If you just send the letter it's much more likely to be read by the hiring executive.

4. Job Boards

- a. Set aside **15 minutes a day** to look at jobs on Indeed.com, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, boutique sites for your industry and specialty, your target company's careers page, and executive recruiters' posted searches. Try not to spend more than this! Your time is better spent on the above activities.
- b. **Don't post your resume** if you are an executive. Recruiters view public posting negatively. Pursue the job search methods that have a higher probability of success: find jobs that are a good match, identify the company and the likely hiring manager (not HR), and connect with them on LI if possible. Mail a VPL to them. Also submit your resume via the online HR portal in order to cover the bases and observe procedure.
- c. Companies hire from **Indeed.com** more than any other job board, but don't get bogged down searching endlessly. Shorten the process with Google alerts. Networking is still king.

5. Recruiters

- a. Recruiters, particularly retained executive recruiters, **can be a promising resource** if you are transitioning to a similar or higher level job in the same industry.
- b. Connect with three small to mid-sized recruitment firms in your target location. Make a contact within the firm. Ask for a few minutes of their time. Introduce yourself and inquire about their searches and also ask for a couple of names of people you might talk to.
- c. You might decide you want to hire one of the many firms who do email blasts to recruiters in your industry/function. This **may get your resume in their databases**, but it is not a high probability job search strategy.

Final words. This outline may seem overwhelming! Here are some tips to counteract the overwhelm:

- Manage your job search like any other project at work, in a **business-like, scheduled, committed way**
- Plan at least 8 hours a week for job search if you're working
- If you're not, put in a normal working day on your job search
- Adopt the workmanlike attitude of "every 'no' is one step closer to a 'yes'"
- **This plan works!** And it works fairly quickly, from two weeks to three months if you have a great executive resume and LinkedIn profile, as my clients do
- If you find you require expert help with your marketing communications, **contact Jean at jc@YesResumes.com. And good luck!**