



STAND OUT

FIVE SURE-FIRE STEPS TO LANDING THAT NEW JOB!

By Patrick McClure

Newsweek magazine proclaimed over 8 months ago that “the Recession is over,” but apparently nobody agreed. It seems like wherever you turn, another company is closing down or laying people off.

Has all this economic turmoil crashed into you? You may be one of the unfortunates struggling through “transition.” Or perhaps you’re stuck in a boring job with little prospect for advancement. Either way, the future may look gloomy.

Relax, there’s something definite you can do to turn your career around. By focusing your efforts on 5 specific areas, you’ll get back on track and prepare yourself for that next career move.

1. ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

I know you’ve probably heard this same message hundreds of times, but it is absolutely critical that you maintain a positive mental attitude.

How is this possible with all the negative economic news piling up day after day after day? There’s a simple answer: *Don’t agree with it.* This is not avoiding bad news by burying your head in the ground like an ostrich, but it is an argument to remain detached from the negativity.

Watch your “self-talk” and monitor for negativity. Any time you say or think a sentence that begins with “I,” it can become a hypnotic command.

If you say to yourself “I’m a failure,” you will be. If you think “I’m just not good at this,” you won’t be. If you think “I just

can’t change,” then you won’t. Be careful not to program yourself for failure.

2. TARGET YOUR FOCUS

If you want to increase your probability of “sealing the deal,” you must concentrate your efforts on where you’re most likely to be successful. This requires precise targeting. You can’t hit the target if you don’t know where it is, and you can’t get that dream job if you can’t envision it precisely.

For example, let’s assume you’re looking for a new position. You need to do a bit of research and analysis to determine the following:

- What industry?**
- What position?**
- What exact company?**
- What’s your career objective?**
- What department would you work in?**
- Who manages that department?**
- Who does that person report to?**

Don’t make the mistake of scanning the want ads or searching the electronic job boards. While you may get lucky and score a job, you need to realize you are competing with thousands of other people.

3. INVENTORY YOUR SKILLS

It’s now time to conduct an inventory of your skills, but with a unique twist. If you are embarking on a job search, you will need to clearly define why a prospective employer would hire you. To be effective, you need to think as the hiring manager does.

“Find a company that excites you, and find out who you need to talk with about possible opportunities. Schedule an informal coffee or luncheon. Tell them you’re interested in their company/industry, and you’d like to find out more about them.”

Try and understand how the interviewer feels. The position needs to be filled, and it’s vital to match the job requirements with your skills. The interviewer probably has a checklist that lists the most valuable traits/experience the company is looking for.

You obviously can’t see the list in advance, but if you fully research the position and the company, you’ll be able to make some accurate guesses. Then inventory your skills and prioritize them based upon what you deem is most important to the hiring manager. The easiest way to do this is to take out a copy of your résumé and simply circle your three key strengths.

4. TAKE CHARGE

Don’t leave your next job to chance. Don’t follow the herd and just limit your search to what is available and posted. Statistics have shown consistently that the best jobs are never posted or listed. They are discovered by word of mouth (WOM) or by business networking, or they get created to solve a recently discovered business need. You need to be the catalyst for change rather than waiting for something to happen. Here’s how.

Find a company that excites you, and find out who you need to talk with about possible opportunities. Schedule an informal coffee or luncheon. Tell them you’re interested in their company/industry, and you’d like to find out more about them. Find out if they are hiring, or might consider hiring to meet some upcoming needs. Ask for advice, offer your resources, and do some quality business networking.

Don’t worry if they’re not hiring right now. Find out if they have a business need that you could solve, and offer to help them by doing some free research. Prove your expertise and gain familiarity by taking positive action to help solve their problem. Let them know how you would approach the problem, and outline your recommended approach to solving it. Many times this will lead to an invitation to interview, or they could even create a job requisition for a new position.

You’ll be surprised how well this approach works. It’s aggressive, it shows initiative, and it’s downright fun.

5. POWERFUL SUCCESS STORIES

Your next job is to develop Powerful Success Stories.

Choose a story from your résumé or from your business life that exemplifies the strength you possess. There is a maxim known to almost every author: “Show, don’t tell.” In the world of sales, one of your most powerful weapons is an effective story. The story, well told, will *sell* your point.

Use these powerful success stories during your interview. Take each of the strengths you circled on your résumé and develop one to two powerful stories that highlight exactly what you did. Don’t brag about yourself—let the story do it! Remember that each story must have a healthy dose of WIIFT—what’s in it for *them*, not you. The story must be clear, short, simple, compelling, timely and results oriented.

Know your key strengths, and prove them with Powerful Stories!

Finally, take heart! Mother Teresa (1910–1997), beloved missionary to India and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, said it this way:

To have courage for whatever comes in life—everything lies in that.

Patrick McClure is a speaker, trainer, consultant and author who enjoys working with individuals and corporations to help them achieve maximum performance. He has dedicated his practice to helping others become more successful. To learn more, and to receive Patrick’s free newsletter, please visit connexiagroup.com or email patrick@connexiagroup.com