A Career in Transition: First-hand Lessons From the Front Line

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Survey

- Raise your hand if you are
  - Currently conducting (or about to start) a job search
  - Active job search in last 5 years
  - Active job search in last 5-10 years
  - Active job search 10+ years ago
Background

• Started at large financial institution right out of college (1995)
• Worked 16 of 17 years at same company
  – Brief stint with “dot-com” startup
  – Survived numerous rounds of layoffs
• 2012 – laid off due to position being moved offshore
• After 9 month job search, landed consulting role in healthcare IT
Disclaimers

• This product is meant for educational purposes only
• No warranty expressed or implied
• Past performance is not a guarantee of future success
• Subject to change without notice
• Your mileage may vary
Be Ready

• Financially
• Mentally
• Build your network ahead of time
• Know what you want/like to do
  – What previous jobs/roles did you enjoy? Why?
Set Expectations

• For yourself
• For others close to you
Prepare your “Marketing Materials”

• Resume
• LinkedIn profile
• Business cards
Resume

• Get rid of the “so what's”
  – Hardworking, energetic, dedicated, etc.
  – Skills which can be assumed – MS Office, Windows, etc.
  – Project Manager - “Prepare and deliver project status reports to stakeholders”
  – Quality Assurance - “Develop and execute test cases as assigned by team lead”
Resume

• Show the value you added, not just what you did - ask yourself why the company would pay someone to do this

  – “Improved defect containment rate (DCR) from 85% to 92% by implementing standard test planning processes across multiple product teams”

  – “Developed standardized project metrics and progress reporting, which led to improved estimation and planning accuracy”
Resume

• Think about what transferable skills you can bring into a new industry
• Consider using a bulleted list or table for areas of expertise
• Keep it short (2-3 pages)
• Have multiple formats (MS Word, Acrobat, text), but not multiple versions
• Once it’s done, leave it alone!
LinkedIn Profile

• Recommendations
• Professional photo
• Custom URL
• Content matching resume
• Consider a “Personal Plus” or “Job Seeker” account for additional functionality
Business/Networking Cards

• Simple, clean, professional layout
• Professional email address (e.g. scott.wadland@hotmail.com)
• URL for LinkedIn profile
• Spend a few $$ for good card stock
• Consider using the back for additional information (e.g. recommendation quotes)
Finding Opportunities

• Networking
• Working with Recruiters
• Using Job Sites
• Keep the “pipeline” full
• If you’re not working
Networking

- Make efficient use of your time at networking groups
- Focus on person-to-person networking
  - Start with your friends and family
  - Don’t eliminate someone because they don’t work in your field - you never know who they know
- Build a network of other job searchers
  - Support group
  - Accountability
  - Lead swapping
- Personalize your invitations to connect
Working with Recruiters

• Let someone else do the searching and help close the deal!
• Be clear on what you are looking for (and what you’re not)
• Take the time to go meet them (if they’re local)
• Make sure you know where they submit your resume
• Remember that their first allegiance is to their own business, not to you
Using Job Sites

• Don’t use until your resume is finished
• Use alerts to learn about new opportunities
• Couple it with networking
  – See who you know (directly or indirectly) who works at the company
  – See if they can get your resume directly to the hiring manager – bypassing HR screeners
Keep the Pipeline Full

• Think of your job search like a sales cycle
  – Networking
  – Applying for jobs
  – Phone screens
  – 1st round interviews
  – 2nd route interviews
  – Offer / rejection

• Throughout your search, make sure you are spending time on all phases
If You’re Not Working

• Make sure you have some job search activity every weekday

• If you have space available to you outside the house, use it 2-3 times a week

• Take some time for yourself and your family
  – Go to the gym
  – Catch up on yard work
  – Read some good books
The Interview

• Background Research and Preparation
  – Find out who you’re going to meet with (name, position, role, etc.)
  – Research each person (LinkedIn, Google, etc.)
  – Research the company
  – Prepare notes and questions for each person you’ll meet

• Take notes (after asking if it’s okay)

• Be prepared for stock interview questions
  – Can you tell me about yourself?
  – What are your strengths/weaknesses?
  – What interests you about this opening?
The Interview

• Be prepared for objections, address but don’t be defensive

• Remember that you’re interviewing them as much as they’re interviewing you - maintain a reasonable balance of power

• Ask courageous questions
  – “What does this organization do well? Where is there the most room for improvement?”
  – “What is it like working with/for (hiring manager)?”
The Interview

• Close the sale - “Are you gonna kiss me or not?”
  – “What do you see as the next step in this process, and what timeframe do you have in mind?”
  – “Based on our discussions, do you have any concerns that I’m not the right person for this role?”

• Send thank-you emails to each person you met (no mass emails!)
  – Highlight specific notes from your discussion

• Follow-up as agreed to
Once You’ve Landed a New Job

• Pull your resume from any job boards you’ve used
• Proactively notify recruiters that you’ve been working with that you have accepted a new role
• Send thank-you notes to people who helped you during your search
• Update your LinkedIn profile
• Continue to build your network!
Questions / Comments?