

Four Little-Used Career Advancement Secrets: You Are a BUSINESS, so Go Out and Act Like One...

By Ken Lizotte CMC

Beyond the usual blah-blah jobsearch advice of putting together a great resume, monitoring Monster.com and other job listing websites, putting the word out via Facebook or Linked In and getting out and networking, there are four additional if little-used techniques that can ensure your career advancement momentum stays strong and effective. In fact, these techniques are so little-used they might for all practical purposes be labeled “secrets.”

Yet professionals who regularly practice them consistently reap such deep benefits again and again that that they would wonder aloud, if asked, how serious career momentum could ever be achieved any other way. The gist of their approach is for an individual professional to think of him/herself as a business, i.e., an entity in the marketplace offering genuine value to one or more customers. Land a good job with a solid employer and you have in fact landed a major client or customer. Perhaps this will remain your ONLY client for many years but with the right mindset, your employer can indeed be perceived as a client or customer.

Specifically, what can you do to foster such a mindset? Try these four

innovative career advancement “secrets” during your next job search and allow them to transform your professional self-image and your career advancement behavior:

1. **Carry “CAREER VALUE” business cards.** Print up some business cards with your name, email, phone and social media info as well as your specialty, i.e., your “career value.” If you are looking for a job in sales, for example, put “Sales Expert” under your name. Former human resources manager? Put “Human Resources Specialist” below your name. By thinking like a business, you will use a personal business card to show that you are a sophisticated professional and to advertise your expertise. Your value in the marketplace is what will eventually get you your next job so use this simple technique to make everyone you meet aware of it.
2. **STAY CONNECTED to your contacts via eblasts.** When networking and trading business cards, do not simply go home afterward and toss the cards you were given by others into a box or corner. Instead, use them! Send a “nice-to-meet-you” email to each



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new contact by the very next day and tell them you’ll be putting their info on your e-list. Invite them to do the same with your info. Then send out periodic, brief

updates of your jobsearch, letting people know what you've been learning about the career you are seeking, what areas you find most fascinating, what trends in your industry you've discovered and what kind of job or networking leads you'd like to find next. Over time, staying connected via such "e-blasts" will allow your connections to fall into productive categories, e.g., referring job leads to you, referring other contacts, alerting you to conferences or networking events etc. Though not everyone on your list will help, many will. Without such a means of staying connected however, no one will know what kind of help you need or, in fact, that you still need any help at all!

3. Write and PUBLISH articles. A powerful marketing tool used by many businesses is to write and publish articles; then make them available to those on your e-list. Publishing an article affords you three big benefits: a) the writing process helps you flesh out and organize your ideas; b) a published article advertises you and your expertise to a wide professional audience, part of which may be interested in hiring

you; and c) your PUBLISHED article elevates your professional credibility above your competition since a third-party entity (the publication) has judged your ideas worthy of publication. Don't forget to announce your published article to your e-list with a link to the publication so that they can read it.

4. GET INVOLVED with professional associations. The smartest companies know they must not only do great work for their clients and customers but they must also get and stay involved with professional or industry nonprofit associations that serve their profession and/or target industry. By doing so, they keep abreast of industry trends and marketplace needs. They also regularly trade prospect leads which, in your case, might instead be job leads.

What is the professional group that represents your expertise? Whether in high-tech, finance, management, marketing, whatever, there will be one or more professional groups that serve you and your colleagues. Google around for the names of these groups, then drop in on a meeting.

Ultimately you want to join them as a new member and volunteer to help them out. You'll end up making great contacts, getting genuine help with your career, experiencing great speakers, attending conferences, perhaps writing for the group's publication and speaking at one of its events yourself. And everyone you meet gets added to your burgeoning e-list!

If you heed these four little-used career advancement secrets, you will separate yourself from even those job competitors who appear more qualified than you. That's because you will be the one getting noticed and they will not. They will have their resume and nothing more. You will have positioned yourself as someone really special. Plus the activity generated by these four secrets will create and build relationships with people who can help you.

And because you have made it easy for them to get to know you and to be reminded of what they can do for you, many of them will! Like any good business, you will have set in motion a "word-of-mouth referral machine" designed to best your competition today... and forever!