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■ News Bits

DBM Study Finds Corporate Ethics Important to Job Seekers

According to a recent global survey by New York-based consulting firm DBM, 82 percent of HR and career experts say corporate leadership ethics are more important to job seekers today — and therefore a factor recruiting top talent.

"Job seekers are putting more time into researching prospective employers before making a decision on a new job," says Tom Silveri, president of DBM.

Silveri says many applicants ask hiring managers what values are most appreciated at the company and how those values translated into day-to-day activities.

– *Source: HR Magazine,* Nov. 2002.

"Job Wrapping" Recruiting Sites

One of the newest terms in Internet recruiting is "job wrapping," which is a technique that several web sites are using to help employers make sure their job openings get "wrapped up regularly" and posted on the employment sites that they have designated.

Gerry Crispin, co-author of *CareerXRoads,* a best-selling reference book for career-related web sites, says that most major Internet job sites are able to make job-wrapping arrangements with companies. Software scans an employer's web site frequently for new job openings that it can add to its web site.

This allows companies to get more visibility for positions that they would otherwise have to manually post to each web site.

– *Source: HR Magazine,* Aug. 2002.

Résumé Writers Digest

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2002 PARW Conference Coverage

Marketing Tips to Boost Your Business

By Louise Garver, CPRW, CEIP, JCTC, CMP

The cornerstone of business growth is marketing, and Jerry Bills of The Résumé Center offered a smorgasbord of ideas to get the phone to ring during his presentation at the 2002 Professional Association of Résumé Writers (PARW) Conference in Dallas, Texas.

"To be successful in marketing anything, you have to understand the demographics of your market, you have to understand your competition, and you have to market specifically to the client base you are targeting," he said.

Based on Bills' experience, here are some tips (as well as pitfalls to avoid) when developing your marketing plan:

- **Yellow Pages Advertising.** To develop an effective ad, Bills advises "conducting market research by reviewing the ads of other résumé firms in major cities across the country, identifying your favorites and then designing your own unique ad."

To ensure it grabs the attention of readers, make it look different than the others. For example, if all the other ads are display ads, develop an in-column ad. If the other ads have color, yours can be black and white.

You can also include in your ad any features and benefits that will make your business stand apart from the competition, such as: fast, affordable services; same-day, one-hour or while-you-wait services; weekend and evening office hours; and certifications, professional memberships, etc.

- **Special Interest Newspapers.** "Find publications targeted to your client base. Some special interest publications are free or inexpensive to advertise in and have a long shelf life."



Dr. Jerry Bills shared his marketing insights at the PARW Conference.

- **Coupons.** "Skip coupon delivery services, as they are more effective when providing a window in which to act. Résumés are an impulse item, and coupons have to be disseminated often to get a response — maybe over a six-month period."
- **Business Cards.** "The most effective piece of paper you can have is your business card. Everyone should be a card-holding member of your fan club."
- **Employment Expert.** "Small newspapers are desperate for well-written copy, and large papers always need experts. Become established as an expert on career issues by sending news releases to television stations and newspapers regularly. Make yourself available as an information source on employment."

continued on page 4

From the Editor: *Sad Endings and New Beginnings*

By Bridget Ann Weide, CPRW

So how did your year turn out? Did you accomplish all that you expected? It seems like it was just January and the promise of the New Year was upon us. You set your sights high, dream big … and then hope it works out, right?

Well, maybe things haven't turned out the way you planned. It happens to all of us. Even the best-laid plans don't always happen the way we thought.

In the last issue, you may remember I talked about things that you put off until a "rainy day" to do. There's something that I want you to do for me *now,* and I don't want you to put it off.

Recently, the professional résumé writing community lost an esteemed colleague, Marshall Wellisch. Marshall was an interesting guy — I had the opportunity to meet him at the NRWA Conference last September, and I had referred a couple of clients his way.

Marshall died suddenly in October. His family is struggling to settle his business matters. None of them have any résumé writing experience, and he left dozens of "open" client files, not to mention books and other stuff.

What I want you to do for me — *now, today, don't put it off!* — is to "buddy up" with another résumé writer so that, in the event that something similar happens to you, he or she could step in and help your family sort through your résumé "stuff," transition your clients and/or "sell" your business.



Bridget Ann Weide, CPRW

It's probably the most important thing that you can do right now.

Now's also the time to evaluate your business needs for the New Year. Catalog any new equipment you purchased and make sure that your current insurance limits are adequate to assure the replacement of your essential equipment. While it's a little more expensive, purchase "replacement value" insurance, especially if your equipment is more than a few years old.

While you're at it, check your policy for coverage of "business interruption," and consider a life insurance policy to cover any outstanding debts you may have incurred on behalf of the business.

I hope none of us will have to use this planning anytime soon, but if you do, know you're making it easier on those you leave behind.

Résumé Writers Digest

Résumé Writers' Digest is a bimonthly subscription newsletter to help résumé writers keep on top of changes in the human resources field, new developments in technology and trends across the résumé writing field.

Each issue provides information about what successful résumé writers across the nation and around the world are doing, along with concise, timely information culled from a review of select periodicals.

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■ Calendar

There is a professional association conference coming to a city near you. Mark your calendar and plan to attend!

March 5-9, 2003
PRWRA Conference
Monteleone Hotel
New Orleans, LA
800-225-8688
www.prwra.com

April 30 to May 3, 2003
CMI Conference
The Fairmont Hotel at the Plaza
Kansas City, MO
www.cminstitute.com

July 16-20, 2003
NRWA Conference
Washington Athletic Club
Seattle, WA
www.nrwa.com

October 8-10, 2003
PARW Conference
Riviera Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, NV
www.parw.com

If you have items for our calendar, send them to:
RWD • PO Box 241621
Omaha, NE 68124-5621

AN IDEA A DAY

Free resources for professional résumé writers:

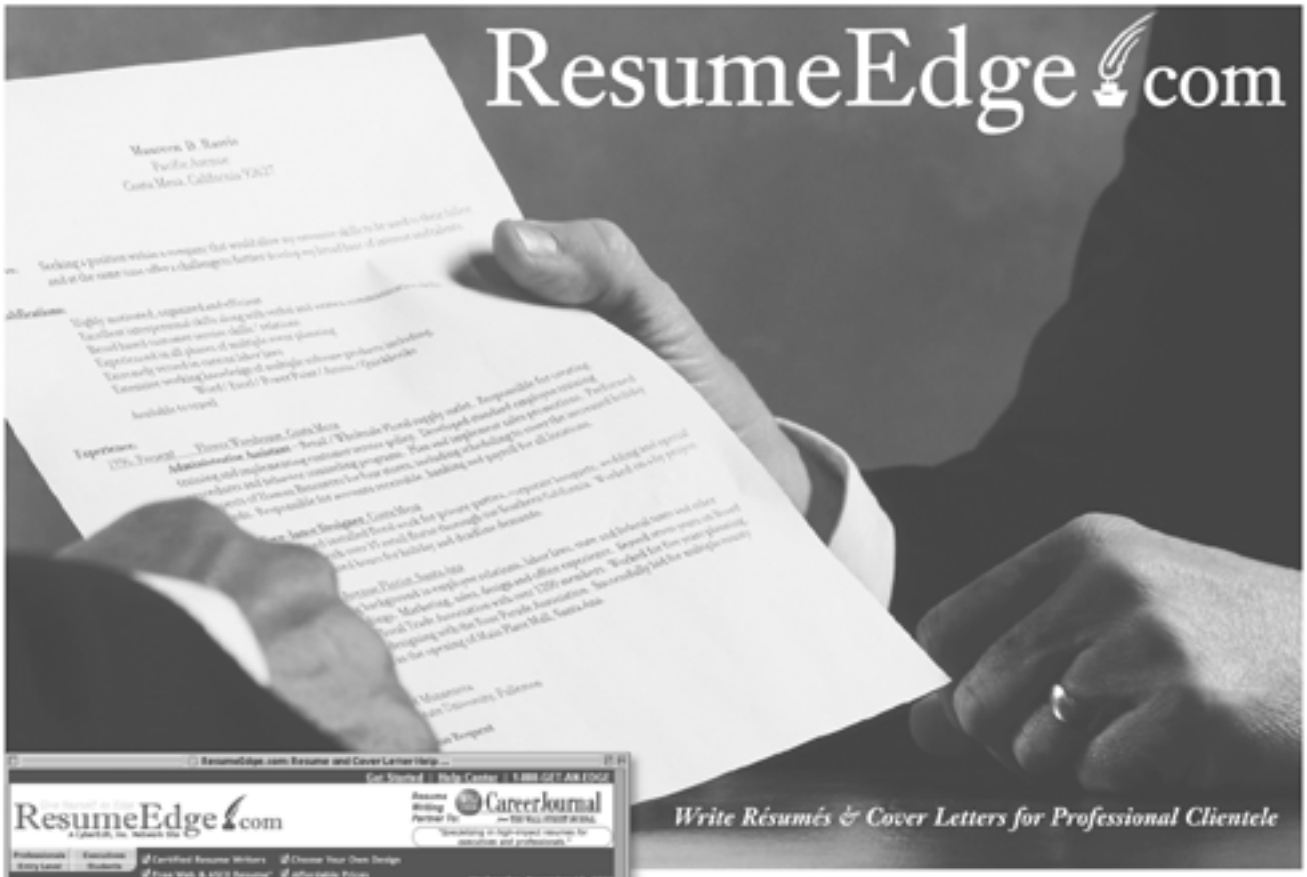
- Marketing Ideas
- Relevant Web Sites
- Research
- Sample News Releases
- Free Materials

… and More!

Go to **www.RWDigest.com** and click on "Message Board" and then "General Discussion" and then "Idea A Day." The last post in each thread is a downloadable Microsoft Word document containing the entire month's "Idea A Day" thread.

E-mail your feedback or ideas for future "Idea A Day" topics to: *editor@rwdigest.com*

Freelance Résumé Writers Wanted At...





ResumeEdge provides the résumé writing services to thousands of sites, including *The Wall Street Journal's* CareerJournal, Lycos, SallieMae, and WetFeet. Our talented résumé writers have made us the Net's premier résumé writing service. Increase your revenue and receive steady work by joining the ResumeEdge team.

- **Competitive Pay**
- **Work from Home from Anywhere in the World**
- **Choose Your Hours (10–40 hours per week)**
- **Start Receiving Work within Days**

Apply at **www.cyberedit.com/hub/,** by submitting your résumé & samples of your work.

"Specializing in High-Impact Résumés for Executives and Professionals"
—The Wall Street Journal's CareerJournal

"The Net's Most Talented Résumé Experts"
—Lycos Careers

THOMSON
PETERSON'S

Bills Offers Tips on Most Effective Tools For Promoting Your Business

continued from page 1

- **Write Articles.** "When the phone isn't ringing, bang out a few articles to market your expertise on résumé writing, interviewing and related topics. You can submit these articles for publication to various sites online."
- **Radio Advertising.** "The problem with radio [advertising] is that the message has to be repeated and repeated and repeated, so your clients have to be listening at the time they need the service. Instead, if there's going to be a plant closing in your local area, you can buy a 30-minute program. Radio stations will sell you air time, and you can host a call-in program where you can be the résumé expert."
- **Job Fairs.** "They can either be a huge source of business or none at all. Negotiate a free booth in exchange for providing free critiques, stressing to the coordinators that your presence will draw more participants. You shouldn't pay to rent a table when you are offering a valuable service. Pass out your brochures and business cards to everyone you meet."
- **Public Speaking/Workshops.** "Develop presentations and workshops and deliver them to various schools, organizations and community groups."
- **Postcards and Newsletters.** "Both are a good idea. However, electronic newsletters can be produced quickly and economically to keep in touch with past clients and prospects."
- **Web Site Partnerships.** "The web is the world's biggest yellow pages book. You need to have a plan for marketing your site that addresses your target market, how clients will find you, how you will position yourself to stand apart from the competition and how you will track visitors to your site."

Promote your site through the development of partnerships with related organizations. You can also utilize pay-per-click services, ranging from inexpensive to very expensive, to drive prospective business to your site.

Some of the services include: **www.ahha.com, www.zuppa.com** and **www.goclick.com.** You can also sell various related services on your site, such as résumé distribution, reference checking, business card CDs and more.

- **Bargain Newspaper Ads.** "Avoid bargain newspaper ads or you'll get tire kickers and price shoppers."

The bottom line is that "you have to spend money to make money," emphasized Bills, who invests 9 percent of his gross sales each month on marketing activities.

"Spend your free time on marketing. That's the way to stimulate traffic and build your business," he says.

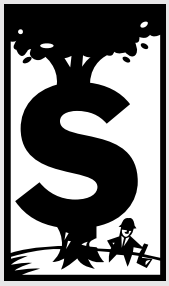
Bills' ideas resonated with attendees, many of whom said they will use his insights in their own businesses.

"I particularly appreciated that Jerry shared fixed and variable cost figures (as a percentage of gross sales) based on his business model," said Peter Hill of Distinctive Résumé Service. "Jerry made a unique suggestion for those of us who participate in job fairs. Place a sign on your table that states, 'Your résumé will get a 60-second scan from employers. Don't expect more from me.' A classic example of his business acumen."

Conference attendee Wanda McLaughlin, of ExecuWrite Résumé and Writing Services, came away from Bills' session with a new perspective.

"I'm going to look at what I'm doing with a new eye. He's a consummate businessman who knows how to maximize his marketing efforts."

— Louise Garver, founder of Career Directions, LLC in Enfield, CT provides comprehensive career assessment, coaching and marketing services to professionals, managers and executive clients worldwide. In addition, her experience encompasses career transition/management consulting to Fortune 500 and other organizations.



Tips From the Hiring Experts: 2002 PARW Conference HR Panel

By Louise Garver, CPRW, CEIP, JCTC, CMP

The human resources panel was comprised of: Debbie Zurinski, Regional Vice President, Snelling Personnel Services; Nicole DiRocco, HR Business Partner, Nortel Networks; and Renee Yousey, Owner, Advanced Placement Team, all from Dallas.

On Résumé Standouts

Zurinski: "I review 100 résumés a week, and I look at the layout, dates and specific information related to the position I am filling. If I'm looking for a Branch Manager, I need someone who is experienced in staffing — and that's the kind of information I'd want to see on the résumé."

DiRocco: "I recruit for telecommunications positions, and I'll take into account the occupation. More job changes are expected in this field. I read the profile and put aside anything over the number of years of experience that's in the ad requirements."

Yousey: "I look for stability since I recruit for accounting and finance positions. I expect to find the buzzwords that are in the ad in terms of skills and experience."

On the Value of Professionally-Prepared Résumés

Zurinski: "It makes a positive statement about people who have spent money to have a professionally-prepared résumé. I look for sales people with a competitive edge, so a quality résumé will make them stand out."

DiRocco: "I have a mixed reaction; professionally-prepared résumés can look better. But the important point is the content; it has to have the information that relates to the specific position."

Yousey: "It doesn't matter who prepared it as long as it's brief, free of typos and provides the information I need."

Fonts: Keep It Basic

Zurinski: "Use Times Roman 11 pt.; don't use colored paper. Avoid fancy fonts; they won't translate [with our software]."

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Bill Murdock: Become The 'Who, What, Where, When, Why and How' Conman!

By Rita Fisher, CPRW

Many of us hate "doing" sales.

Why?

Because we don't like to be rejected and perceived as pushy.

Bill Murdock has a 75 percent closing ratio and has had only three no-shows so far this year.

Murdock, an ex-used car salesman, shared his seven steps to the sales process, one designed to ease your sales burdens.

Here are the seven steps:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Initial Qualification of Buyer
3. Needs Assessment
4. Product Presentation
5. Trial Close
6. Isolation of Objection(s)
7. Close

Meet and Greet

Before coming to the conference, Murdock called several résumé writers at their offices to help him illustrate the point he was trying to make with this first step.

Murdock didn't like what he heard when we picked up our phones.

In his opinion, we were all "trying too hard to sound professional." He could tell when we were short on time and didn't really want to talk.

The first step of the sales process is to sound confident on the phone and interested in the person calling. It is not necessary to sound happy, but it is absolutely essential to come across as genuinely interested.

Buyer Qualification

According to Murdock, the biggest mistake we make when we have someone on the phone is giving them a "data dump," spitting out our verbal business cards.

One of the first questions we all receive is: "How much is a résumé?"

Instead of giving the prices out up front, answer this question with:

"It depends. Let me ask you a couple of questions first." (This is where you can qualify the prospective buyer.)

Then, ask him/her questions such as:

- "What are you trying to accomplish with your career at this point?
- "What kind of qualifications do you have?"

The main point here is that it is important to qualify the prospect first before quoting a price.

Another point to consider is that when you give the price out right away, the prospect will automatically think that the decision whether to hire you should be based on the price alone.

At this point, you lose control of the sales process and let the client control the conversation.

Needs Assessment

This is the most important step.

When you are on the phone, your job is to listen and ask questions. You need to find out what the client's needs are and position your questions and responses accordingly.

The next time you are trying to sell a prospect on your services, pay attention to how many times you use the following words:

I
ME
MY
MINE
MYSELF

The fewer times you use these words over the phone, the greater the possibility of actually closing that sale.

Why?

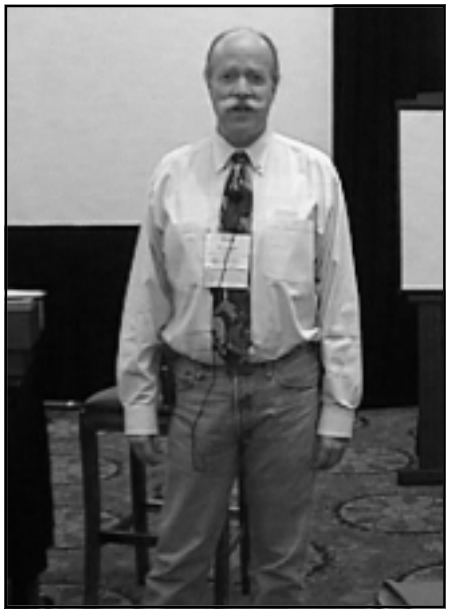
Because you will be talking about the client and his/her needs, instead of yourself and what you are about.

You are irrelevant.

You are the least important thing to the potential client. They don't want to hear about *you*.

They want to hear what you can do for them.

In order to assess the prospect's needs, use the open-ended question approach, meaning that instead of using the "I, ME, MY, MINE, MYSELF" strategy, focus on asking questions that begin with the following words: *Who, What, When, Where* and *Why.*



Former car salesman Bill Murdock

- "Who are you working for?"
- "What do you do?"
- "Where do you see your career progressing?"

Murdock believes that résumé writers should spend 25 to 30 minutes on the phone with a potential client initially and that the potential client should be doing most of the talking by answering our open-ended questions.

Be prepared to spend 30 minutes, if you have to, on the phone with a prospect. If you don't have a half-hour to spend, don't even pick up the phone in the first place.

A point he emphasized is that your income will be directly proportional to the time you spend on the phone with the client, because you will establish yourself as someone who is really interested in them and someone who knows about their field.

Murdock estimated that you will earn $10 for every minute you spend asking open-ended questions.

Product Presentation

Résumé writers have to realize that the customer only has a *vague idea* about résumés.

That is why it is a good strategy, as Murdock suggested, to offer to show

continued on page 6

Former Car Salesman Bill Murdock Teaches Résumé Writers The Secrets of the Sale

continued from page 5

some résumé samples to prospects as "product presentation."

"Would you like to see some résumé samples I have written in your field?"

Create samples of your work in many fields to demonstrate to prospective clients that you speak their language.

Become a conman! A conman? Yes, a Confidence Man.

When a client calls, she wants you to take her into your confidence. She wants you to talk to her in her own language. If she is an accountant, she wants you to talk to her in accountant language. If she is an attorney, she wants you to talk to her in attorney language.

Samples help you to stand out and clearly demonstrate that you *do* speak their language.

Trial Close

- Don't put pressure on people to make an appointment.
- Don't try to close too quickly.

A point Murdock emphasizes is to *listen* much more than you *talk.*

Everyone thinks that a good salesperson has to be a smart talker. But, in reality, a good salesperson has to be a smart listener.

The bottom line is: the more the client talks, the more money you will make.

This step (trial close) could be the final close if the prospect doesn't have any objections. Try to ask for the appointment after you have spent a considerable amount of time with the prospect. If the prospect brings up an objection, move on to step number six.

Isolation and Inversion of Objection(s)

Objections can come in many forms and shapes. The key is to first isolate these objections and then to fix them.

For example:

Objection: "The price is too high."

Murdock: "Others have told me the same thing, John. Is there any other reason why you wouldn't want to buy from me?"

Other questions to ask to isolate objections include:

- "You know I hear that a lot the first time somebody wants to buy from me. Would you mind telling me why?"
- "Is there any other reason you wouldn't want to do business with me right now?"

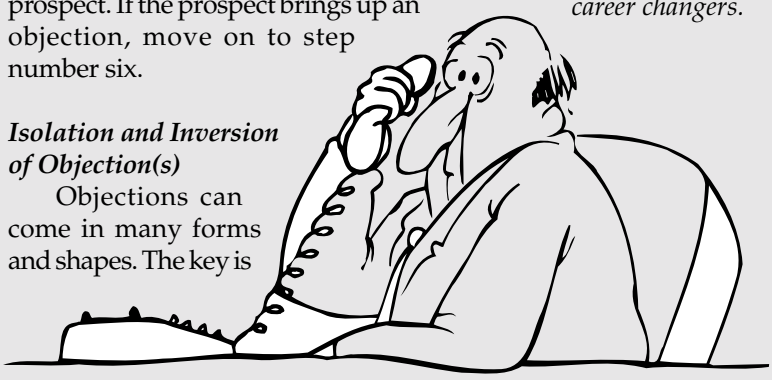
If they say: "No, this is the only reason," then move on to fix the problem by offering to work out the details.

Close

This is the final step. Ask for the business. Ask for the appointment and offer a couple of different times for them to choose from.

- "Would you like to get started today?"
- "How would you like to pay for your résumé?"
- "Let me get the agreement ready for you to sign. Will you be paying with check or credit card?"

— *Rita Fisher, a Certified Professional Résumé Writer, is the owner of* ***CareerChangeResumes.com.*** *She specializes in working with career changers.*



HR Panel Shares Résumé Preferences

continued from page 4

DiRocco: "I recommend using just the basic fonts; fancy script is a distraction."

Yousey: "You can use bold, italic, bullets and [line] rules to break up the type on a résumé."

Profile Summary and Objectives

Zurinski: "Avoid objective statements and include a profile that focuses on the position requirements."

DiRocco: "Describe the skills you are offering related to the position; objectives aren't necessary."

Yousey: "Use an objective if the position that you are applying for is different from your present career. Look at the ad and use verbiage from the ad; that will help an applicant get called for an interview."

Explaining Short-Term Gaps In Employment

Zurinski: "If within 24 months, an applicant has had six jobs, that's job hopping. But, jobs that are one to two years in length are not necessarily job hopping in today's market."

DiRocco: "Layoffs are understandable with today's market condition, so I expect more short-term employment on a résumé."

Yousey: "Mentioning loss of employment due to layoffs or mergers on a résumé is okay to do."

Résumé Length

Zurinski: "Keep it to a one-line description of the different jobs, with a focus on the accomplishments."

DiRocco: "I prefer one to two pages with accountability and achievements for the positions; that's what sells me."

Yousey: "I wouldn't throw away a three-page résumé, but if you can be concise, do it; don't ramble."

Length of Work History

Zurinski: "I'm only interested in the last five to 10 years (five if a junior level applicant with little experience)."

DiRocco: "The last 10 years are most important to me."

continued on page 8

Jay Block's Career Success Prescriptions

By Tracy Bumpus, CPRW, JCTC

Over the past few years, the résumé writing profession has made a gradual, but consistent shift toward integrating career coaching into the service offerings and the industry has reflected that shift with additional emphasis on training for providing career coaching.

Jay Block contends that résumé writing *is* coaching and the two cannot be separated. The process of résumé development places all writers in the place of coaches. According to Block, 87 percent of Americans do not like their jobs, but people are fearful of job search, mainly because they are unskilled in the process.

By actively integrating coaching into client engagement, résumé writers can guide client into the Three Components of Career Success:

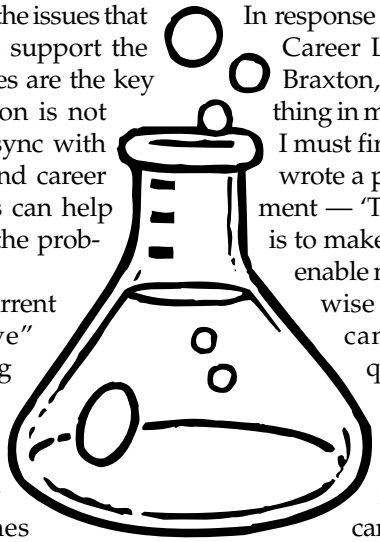
- Meaningful and purposeful careers;
- Mastery of career management techniques; and
- Attaining a peak performance state of mind.

To successfully coach clients, Block states that a new system is needed that can be easily followed by career coaches and résumé writers. The current coaching model or system is a system that integrates life into the career model. People are taught to build their lives around their careers. The new system would integrate the career into the life model.

To have a life model, a person needs a mission statement — a reason to work or a goal of significance. If work doesn't have a purpose, it's a waste of time. Developing a personal mission statement is key to the new system of coaching that Block promised to reveal in a few weeks' time.

The new coaching system begins with a core mission statement and is surrounded by concurrent circles that radiate outward from it as rings on a pond. The next ring out from the core of the mission statement is signature values. Signature values incorporate life values and career values and may include such things as respect, salary, love, challenge, integrity, etc.

Signature values are the issues that are most important and support the mission statement. Values are the key to everything; if a person is not happy, they are out of sync with their signature values and career coaches/résumé writers can help them determine where the problems lie.



The following concurrent ring on this "bullseye" model of the new coaching system consists of influences such as a Master Team of advisors/mentors, philosophy, energy and spirituality. Coaches can assist people in identifying these ingredients of the system. Awareness is power and finding that is a huge step toward success.

Once people know what to do to succeed, it's the coach's job to encourage them to take action. Coaches make people work harder, not less. Block states that 93 percent of people won't commit to doing something unless they first know how to do it.

Successful people are the people who get in and do what all the others won't do for fear of failure. Block presented four killers of success:

1. Excuses
2. Blame
3. Procrastination
4. Lack of discipline

People must have very strong reasons to act or the four killers of success win. Reasons create urgency and urgency leads to action. Block gave an example of an elderly mother who lifted a crushed car off her son in order to pull him out. The woman had a tremendous reason to take action, a reason that overwhelmed the four killers listed above.

Coaches have to show their clients the urgency to take action. To do that, coaches must effectively change the way people feel. Coaches must change their words that have negative emotional impact when dealing with clients. Coaches must change the focus from job search to life search. And finally, coaches must encourage a spiritual bridging for their clients that brings about a balance between life and career.

In response to the presentation on Career Life Integration, Alice Braxton, CPRW said, "If anything in my life will ever change, I must first change. Therefore, I wrote a personal mission statement — 'The purpose of my life is to make personal choices that enable me to help others make wise choices, thus significantly improving the quality of all our lives.'"

Block wrapped up the session by providing "Jay's 10 Commandments" that coaches can give their clients.

1. Have a compelling reason backed with passion.
2. Incorporate spiritual faith.
3. Take personal responsibility.
4. Develop and maintain an empowering attitude.
5. Exercise focused discipline.
6. Develop a positive sphere of influence.
7. Be willing to embrace all struggles.
8. Promote good health.
9. Master fear.
10. Take massive action.

Makini Siwatu, CPRW, summarized the presentation by stating, "Jay Block gave a moving presentation on integrating your life with your career. Believing that career management and job search strategies are not about techniques and tools, but about feelings and emotions, Jay took us on a particularly sensitive journey called the Circle of Life, which incorporated our Life Goals, Personal Mission Statements, Spiritual Beliefs, Energy and our Master Team and how they influence the careers we choose. This innovative approach to career development can benefit both the coaches and their clients in ways that will improve their quality of life."

— *Tracy Bumpus, CPRW, JCTC is Executive Director of RezAMAZE.com and Managing Partner of two technology-related businesses in Atlanta, Georgia. She has been published in national and regional publications and held leadership positions in three résumé industry organizations.*

HR Panel Reinforces Notion of 'Individual Preferences'

continued from page 6

Yousey: "It depends on how much experience someone has, but generally I would be interested in the past 10 to 15 years."

References, Photos and Other Supporting Documents

Zurinski: "It becomes a filing nightmare to receive too much information up front; just send the résumé initially."

DiRocco: "Avoid photos; they open up the company to potential liability issues. I prefer not to receive references or other information up front."

Yousey: "I like to receive reference information with résumés. With all the companies going out of business, it's smart to get reference letters from employers before you leave."

Résumé Submission

Zurinski: "I receive most résumés via e-mail. It's best to submit résumés in Word format. Don't use RTF format; anything other than Word isn't compatible with my system and looks garbled/unreadable."

DiRocco: "I get most résumés through e-mail as well. Avoid inserting links (company URLs); they create problems with my system."

Yousey: "Word documents are easiest for me to receive, but ASCII files inserted in the body of the e-mail message are okay too."

The Value of the Cover Letter

Zurinski: "I don't really read cover letters."

DiRocco: "I read cover letters and note any typos."

Yousey: "I will read cover letters and look for information that wouldn't be on a résumé, such as if they are relocating, how they communicate, why they are in the job market, if they've done their homework and if they have personalized the letter."

HR's Influence in Candidate Selection

Zurinski: "The HR group can be viewed as a roadblock, [but] it depends on each company. Is HR viewed as a business partner? You need to understand the role of HR in a particular company. It's a good idea to apply directly to the hiring manager; I see it as taking the initiative."



DiRocco: "To get in the door, it's best to go directly to the hiring manager."

Yousey: "Send a résumé to both HR and the hiring manager; use networking and all avenues to get an interview."

Overqualified Candidates

Zurinski: "If I am recruiting for an entry-level position, someone with more experience won't be the best match. To make them more marketable on paper, downplay all the top-level strengths. Don't use the résumé solely with older candidates; get them hooked into networking."

DiRocco: "If a position requires only five to seven years of experience, and I see in the profile that the person has 20 years of experience, I put that résumé aside. My concern is that they won't be challenged enough. Job titles are deceiving because they differ from company to company, so skills and achievements become more important to stress on a résumé."

Yousey: "Avoid using 'Owner' or 'President' as the titles; the connotation may be that they may want to take over; instead you could use 'Managing Partner' or something similar."

Background and Reference Checks

Zurinski: "I always get references; no need to include them on the résumé though. I'll ask for them."

DiRocco: "I will check references on candidates that I am serious about hiring; many companies don't have a reference checking or employment verification policy."

Yousey: "I always conduct reference checks. Some companies are only providing employment dates, but some will provide more information."

Elaine S. Wilder, of Wilder Résumé & Career Coaching, summarized the thoughts of many who attended this session.

"For the most part, I believe I am on target with what they look for on résumés. The panel reiterated time and time again what they looked for in résumés — matching skill sets with specific positions. I will also think twice about including years of experience in a summary or profile, as it could knock my candidate out of an interview!"

"The information proffered by our astute 2002 HR panel members in many ways confirmed — and in many ways, contradicted — what previous HR panels have told us," commented Debbi O'Reilly of A First Impression.

"*What* the reader wants (essential information about skills, traits and experience levels) remains consistent. *how* the reader wants to receive it is a mystery to be solved on a case-by-case basis. There is one more constant: A well-written, professionally-presented résumé has a greater chance of opening interviewers' doors," she added.

Oh, For the Love of a Client! … and Other Tidbits from the Contractor/Subcontractor Panel at the PARW/CC Conference

By Elaine Wilder, CPRW

Janice Worthington, Tracy Bumpus and Makini Siwatu gave a most informative and animated panel discussion on the inner workings of "Contractors and Subcontractors." They answered questions from moderator Frank Fox and conference attendees.

Before becoming a résumé writer, Worthington was a corporate recruiter and "candidate advocate." She now has four active subcontractors and believes in "sharing the wealth."

Her method is to train new subcontractors to do the work the way she wants it done. Worthington reviews everything her subcontractors do. In her words, "If you can't do the job, don't work for me." Her sons also work in her business, and she says that policy "goes for them as well."

Ultimately, Worthington or an associate will go over the résumé with the client, so it is important that words are chosen for a reason, and it is vital to be able to explain the meaning of those words to the client.

She also says "there must be respect and compatibility between the contractor and subcontractor."

As a résumé writer, Bumpus deals with engineers, chemists and technical clients. In 2000, she became "bored and burned out" with just writing résumés; however, she did not want to work for someone else, so she started acting as a contractor.

She has a team of four writers who she selected "from their talents" and referrals. Bumpus likes to be "in tune" with her subcontractors' personalities. She expects them to meet deadlines, take constructive criticism, learn from their mistakes and be able to write a technical résumé. Networking at PARW conferences led her to all her current team members.

Siwatu researched the possibility of becoming a subcontractor before giving it a try. She received a request from the PARW E-list to write for a résumé writing businesses. Siwatu submitted her biography and a sample résumé packet.

Time constraints and meeting deadlines are tremendously important to her. When a family member became ill, she notified her contractors to let them know she would not be able to work. Likewise, she let them know when she was available to work again.

"I'm going to meet deadlines whether I am subcontracting or they are my own clients," she says.

She gears her work to what the clients and contractors want.

Money Issues

Attendees were especially interested in the bottom line — how much money can a subcontractor make?

Fox interjected a comment on contract language regarding résumé pricing and what the subcontractor's cut would be. If the contractor charges $149 for the résumé and the subcontractor only gets $49, that is considered to be on the "low end" of the pay scale. It was noted that, "you don't have to accept that rate, as other contractors do pay appropriate fees."

Worthington said that none of her writers are paid under $100 per project; however, she will not pay a writer until he/she is trained and actually worthy of being paid. Most of her writers get $250, plus she may give a monthly bonus. If there should be an underpayment for some reason, she will "make up for it the next time."

Worthington considers herself to be fair and works with her subcontractors on "good faith." She would like subcontractors to think she is wonderful and generous, because "you cannot put a price on heart and competence."

Bumpus pays 35 to 40 percent of her gross charges. The subcontractor gets a percentage only of the piece he or she worked on. For example, the client may purchase a résumé and cover letter, but if the writer only worked on the résumé, he or she would only be paid for the résumé portion of the total invoice. Bumpus said she may also pay more if the client needs to be interviewed by the writer directly.

The panel also responded to audience questions, which included:

Do writers do revisions?

Worthington was quick to jokingly tout herself as the "Queen of Control" as far as client satisfaction is concerned. Most of the time, subcontract résumé writers do not want to talk to clients.

Does all client information funnel through you?

Worthington initially gathers all the information or has an appropriate person make client contact. Others may be trained to gather information from the client and represent her company professionally. The important thing is that the client is happy.

Siwatu said she would not bypass the contractor to speak with a client without permission and would report everything back to the contractor.

Team writers are well known to Bumpus's clients. Her writers do not have contact with clients, although they could have teleconferences if needed.

Is not talking to the client a handicap?

Siwatu answered no. She prefers not talking to the client. She gleans her information from the contractor.

How do you translate information to subcontractors? What kind of format do they get?

Thoroughness in collecting information from the client is essential. Worthington uses questionnaires as well as client consultation. Clients are instructed in how to fill out the questionnaires in a logical format.

In addition, writers are given an old résumé as well as fact sheets.

Microsoft Word is used for universal formatting.

Bumpus said she sends notes from the client consultation, the old résumé and any other documentation to the writer.

"If the writer does not understand the notes or client background, she contacts me and I recheck the documentation," Bumpus said. She noted that she usually does the revisions.

How do you organize the information from your clients?

Bumpus said that this is an ongoing project for her. She has a system using a Daytimer and files on her desk

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Contractors and Subcontractors Share Their Working Strategies

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labeled First Draft, Second Draft and Project Writer.

How do you include your own notes with the client's questionnaire?

Writing notes on the questionnaire during the interview to personalize the client's information is Worthington's method. She said personalizing the résumé helps the client get an interview and ultimately get the job.

What are the key points of contracts?

Bumpus does not reveal the identity of her subcontractors to maintain their privacy. She has a non-compete clause in her contract but said she has never had a problem with this.

Worthington does not use contracts. Instead, she sends an e-mail asking writers if they are able to do the work.

She also has an agreement that she owns all subcontractor work.

Do you care if subcontractors use other contractors?

No one voiced disapproval of writers working for other contractors.

How long is it before subcontractors get paid?

Bumpus said she pays at the end of the month after the subcontractor sends her an invoice.

Siwatu is paid by check. As a safety net, she also sends an e-mail to double check and maintain the integrity of the contractual agreement.

What kind of turnaround time do you expect?

Worthington offers 10-14 day turnarounds for her clients. She allows the subcontractor weekends and several business days to complete a draft.

The norm for Siwatu is three to seven days, although she usually tries to get the work back earlier.

Are contractor/subcontractor relationships rough?

The consensus was that writers are usually very good in the beginning of the business relationship, but some tend to slack off as time goes on. At that point, no additional work is referred to those writers.

How important is your web site?

Bumpus said she is completely virtual, with subcontractor/contractor tools on the site for assistance.

Worthington stated she had used Yellow Pages advertising for many years, but the web site gives more information, work samples, testimonials, company philosophy and mission.

Is the questionnaire electronic or do you mail it to the client? Is anyone willing to share their questionnaire?

Worthington said, "Some of my clients are too computer illiterate for questionnaires. I will get the information any way the client desires. I will not alienate the client — I am the service."

Her questionnaire comes from the Career Masters Institute forms archive.

How do you find people to write good cover letters?

Some writers do not like writing and designing cover letters.

Worthington says she has found there are two types of writers — Hemingways and technical. She said it is difficult to find good cover letter writers.

Bumpus was adamant that a cover letter be able to get the reader's attention. She said design and personalizing the letter was very important to her.

Do you expect subcontractors to be ghost writers for you?

Even though work is flowing through their businesses, both contractors felt writers need some freedom in style.

"Giving writers formatting freedom makes their job more pleasant," Bumpus noted.

If we want to subcontract, is there a way in PARW/CC to do that?

Fox said the E-list was used for that initially, but networking at the conferences or referrals now seem to be the method contractors use to find their writers.

Most contractors like to see the personalities of the folks they hire. Also,



they like to see certifications, as it lends credibility to their work, although hiring a writer is not based on certifications alone.

In closing, Fox reiterated that résumé writers who do not enjoy the "client contact" part of the process may find subcontracting to be the "perfect solution," as they can pursue the administrative side rather than sales and marketing.

The business of contracting and subcontracting has definitely blossomed in the last two to four years.

Alice Braxton, CPRW, CEIP commented, "I think one of the most important things that the contractor/subcontractor panel taught us was there is life after burnout! For the résumé writer who just can't get enough work to make him happy, there is subcontracting. For the writer who just can't write another résumé due to burnout or illness or family responsibility, there is contracting! It seems like the way to duplicate yourself through others."

— Elaine S. Wilder, CPRW, CEIP is the President of Wilder Résumé & Career Coaching in Winston-Salem, NC, dedicated to developing personal career marketing tools and plans for individuals.

Kevin Skarritt: 'Your Web Site — Step by Step'

By Rita Fisher

Kevin Skarritt, resident web site builder and marketing guru, gave a informative presentation on step-by-step web marketing. In his presentation, Skarritt covered two main areas: Driving traffic to your web site (including strategic partnerships, reciprocal linking and article writing) and your search engine plan (including classic search engines and newer pay-per-click sites).

To start with, Skarritt mentioned that résumé writers should check out **wwwInternetday.com,** to learn more about web site marketing. This site has two years' worth of marketing ideas in its archives.

Driving Traffic to Your Web Site Through Strategic Partnerships

Skarritt said that the most productive way of driving traffic to your résumé writing site is through strategic partnerships.

- Step #1 **Identify Your Niche**

We all have a niche, Skarritt said. It might be executives, manufacturing, finance, pharmaceutical or "other."

- Step #2 **Do Online Research**

Start at **www.Google.com** and type in relevant keyword phrases. For example, "manufacturing professional."

You will have thousands of results pop up in response. Review some of these sites and see if you can figure out what kind of services/products they offer and how you can tie into what they have to offer.

- Step #3 **Make Initial Contact**

— Write a powerful letter of introduction.
— Pick up the phone.
— Understand that this will be new to them.
— Sell yourself!

- Step #4, **Do's and Don'ts**

Establish partnerships. You are *not* looking for link exchanges (reciprocal links). Measure the traffic you are receiving from the link through:

— **www.Hitbox.com;**
— **www.Extremetracker.com;**
— Your own ISP's tracking pages;
— Proprietary scripts; and
— Extended log files (WebTrends, FastStats).

Skarritt advises measuring the time you spend on these partnerships and the return on investment they bring you. Be willing to kill the partnership if it's not working

Generating Hits from Reciprocal Links

One of the best ways to find prospective link partners is through "site flipping." Skarritt says site flipping is basically a way to find out who is linking to a certain site.

Here is how to do it in Altavista. Let's say you want to find out who links to **www.ResumeWriters.com.**

- Go to Altavista.
- Type in the search box: *link:www.ResumeWriters.com*

The search results you see are the sites linked to ResumeWriters.com and these are the sites you want to establish a reciprocal link relationship with.

As you can see, site flipping is a great way to find out who is linking to your competitors.

You can also use Google, Lycos, MSN, Hotbot and Fast/AlltheWeb to flip web sites.

Tip: Skarritt advises résumé writers *not* to put a Resources/Links page on their homepage because it makes it too easy for people to link out and leave the web site.

The aim is to keep visitors at your site as long as you can in order to positively influence their spending decision.

You *will* want to create a special "Links" page on your site. Add your links (text links only — images take too long to download). Keep your links current. Broken links will impact your search engine listings and will keep you from getting listed on Yahoo!

Skaritt noted that the easiest way to elevate your rankings on Google is to have links to your site. The more links that point to your site, the better.

Writing Articles

Another important part of your web site should be your content — specifically, articles you write. You can either write new articles or collect old ones you've written and modify them for your web site. Articles can vary in length from 200 to 1,500 words.



Kevin Skarritt shares his web hints.

In addition to having articles on your web site, get them published on other people's web sites! Research possible distribution sources.

Conduct a search for submission sites by using the following phrases:

— "free article submissions"
— "ezine general distribution"
— "ezine publishers"
— "article distribution"
— "free article resources"
— "ezine directory"

Skarritt advises finding directories of ezines (where hundreds of ezines are listed in one location), such as on **www.zinos.com.**

Another popular way to create content is to start a "blog." Blogs are personal websites or "weblogs."

For example, many fledging writers have their own blogs where they list all their articles, publications and stories.

It takes considerable time to create a blog, but it can be a great creative outlet for you. Blogs act to increase your "popularity." They are also a place to sell ebooks and special reports for passive income.

Search the Internet for more information on "blogs."

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Skarritt Offers Tips on Web Site Maximization

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Develop a Search Engine Strategy

When working with "classic" search engines, the key is to find new search phrases.

First, identify overworked phrases. Go to **www.EmploymentToolbox.com** and click on the link to the "Overture Search Term Suggestion Tool."

You will be taken to a page where you can enter any keyword and see how many times that keyword and related keywords were searched in the previous month.

By conducting this search, you will come up with many new phrases you might not have thought of any other way.

The second step is to analyze the phrases. Select the "Keyword Analysis Tool" on **EmploymentToolbox.com.** Your objective is to find phrases with a high Keyword Analysis Value (KAV).

The third step is to "optimize your pages." Each page should have one phrase in the tag structure.

Skarritt advises résumé writers to feel free to model their tag structure on the one on **www.AcornCreative.com**

Access the tag structure by going to "View" and "Source" in Internet Explorer. Modify the tag structure to your business by inserting the appropriate content.

He also recommends tweaking your web site's "keyword density" using **www.keywordcount.com.**

Submit Your Site to Search Engines

Skarritt advises résumé writers *not* to spend $299 to register their web site with Yahoo. Instead, focus your energies on Altavista, Google and second-tier search engines.

He also said that you shouldn't use search engine blast services that promise to register your site with "1,500 search engines." The fact is that there are only a handful of search engines that people actually use.

The rest of the sites that these services promise to register you with are "Free For All Links" — only "good" for snatching your e-mail address to send you spam mail.

For more information on this topic, visit **www.SearchEngineWatch.com.**

Pay-Per-Click Web Sites

These are search engines that allow you to "buy" search results by choosing keywords and then having your web site pop up when those words are used in a search. These can be highly effective — or a waste of money — depending on whether or not you use them effectively.

- Step #1 — **Find Popular Phrases**

Skarritt says: "Again, using the Overture Search Term Suggestion Tool will help you come up with phrases that you may not think of on your own …and they're all popular!"

- Step #2 — **Get Variations on Your Popular Phrase List**

Skarritt says: **"**For example: With YourMissingLink.com, we wanted to address the obvious phrase 'head hunter,' but we also selected variations on the phrase." (For example, each state from "Alabama Head Hunter," through "Wyoming Headhunter.")

"Create your list in a word processing document (don't hand-write it), so you can cut-and-paste your phrases into a web form," he advises.

What you want is low cost, "high popularity" phrases that lead qualified prospects to your site.

- Step #3 — **Prioritize Your Phrases and Start Analyzing Them**
- Go to Overture.com and paste in your phrases one at a time to view the most up-to-date listings.
- Make note how much would it cost to get into the top three spots. Why the top three spots? Because the top three results will automatically be served up at the top of Yahoo!, MSN, InfoSpace, Ask Jeeves, AltaVista and Netscape.

- Step #4 — **Register Your Phrases with Pay-Per-Click Engines**

Plan to spend several hundred dollars on registering with pay-per-click search engines.

Write powerful marketing tag lines to get people to click through and buy.

Skarritt suggests starting with Overture.com. He says, "you will get enough traffic to determine if the pay-per-click strategy will work for you."

One very important bit of advice from Skarritt is to "measure the traffic you get from these links so you can measure your ROI. If you don't, you are wasting your money," he said. "Determine what your 'break point' is and expand your listing up to that level."

Here is a list of other pay-per-click web sites Skarritt mentioned:

- Looksmart.com
- Google AdWords (AdWords Select)
- FindWhat.com
- 7Search.com
- GoClick.com
- Xuppa.com
- Kanoodle.com
- EPilot.com
- Ah-ha.com
- Search123.com
- IQSeek.com
- Espotting.com

- Step #5 — **Manage the Process**

You will need to review the process weekly or more often.

Skarritt says that these are the key points you should consider:

- Which phrases are working and which aren't?
- Did you get knocked out of the top three…and are you still willing to pay to get back into those spots?
- Which taglines/blurbs are "pulling" for you?
- Do any new phrases need to be added or old phrases deleted?

Spam Marketing

Skarritt warned résumé writers not to spam. "You risk loss of your hosting, loss of your dialup/DSL connection, getting black-listed and male pattern balding."

Okay, so he made up that last one — but it's still a bad thing to do.

Increase Your Web Site Traffic!

EXAMPLE

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.RWDigest.com

Imagine your web site address everywhere you can think of! *Draw visitors to* ***your site*** *with a self-inking stamp. Just $19.95 per stamp (includes shipping/handling). Your choice of colors: green, blue, red or black. To order, call (480) 596-9109 or* e-mail *sue@asdfwordpro.com.*

Temperament and Effective Job Interviewing

By Louise Garver, CPRW, CEIP, JCTC, CMP

"The goal should not be to hire — or get hired — but to make sure there's a job match. That should be the goal of both the company recruiting and the job candidate," Leroy Hamm, President of International Human Development Corp., stressed during his presentation at the PARW/CC convention.

"Experience, education and skill set are included in the interview selection. However, personality dynamics are often overlooked in the process, and it can sabotage [your] effectiveness if you don't know who you are talking to," he continued.

"Everything revolves around the concept of temperament," said Hamm. It's a concept first introduced by Hippocrates 2,400 years ago.

Just what is temperament? Hamm defined it as "the inborn traits that cause you, in part, to do what you do. Behavior comes from genetic predisposition (you are what you were at age 5), nurture (the environment) and the choices you make."

"You can miss the target if you're not aware of this concept," he said.

Hamm explained the fundamental principles of temperament and its application to successful communications during the interview process.

For example, "Most people buy because they like the salesperson, so understanding who you are dealing with can help in selling and in job interviewing," Hamm noted.

Everyone has traits of all four temperaments — Choleric, Sanguine, Phlegmatic and Melancholy — and each person is a combination of two temperaments: primary and secondary.

Temperaments are the basis for DISC assessment tools. Each temperament has its strengths and weaknesses:

- **Choleric:** visionary — consuming; decisive — controlling; results-oriented — end-justifies-the-means.
- **Sanguine:** open — shares too much; lighthearted — doesn't take life seriously; people-oriented — talks too much.
- **Phlegmatic:** consistent — stubborn; loyal — overlooks defects; service-oriented — taken advantage of.

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THE CHOLERIC TEMPERAMENT

The Choleric is an extroverted, hot-tempered, quick thinking, active, practical, strong-willed, and easily annoyed person. They are self-confident, self-sufficient, and very independent minded. They are decisive and opinionated and find it easy to make decisions for themselves as well as others.

1.	Primary need:	To get results. They shape their environment by overcoming opposition to accomplish results.
2.	Brief description:	Decisive, Confident, Direct, Demanding, Risk-taker
3.	Strength:	Desire for immediate results
4.	Weakness:	Explosiveness
5.	May not be good at:	Following through with details

THE SANGUINE TEMPERAMENT

The Sanguine is an extroverted, fun-loving, activity-prone, entertaining, persuasive, and optimistic person. They are receptive and open to others and build relationships quickly. They are animated, excited, and accepting of others. They will smile and talk easily and often.

1.	Primary need:	To be accepted socially. They shape their environment by bringing others into alliance to accomplish results.
2.	Brief description:	Enthusiastic, Impulsive, Sociable, Persuasive
3.	Strength:	Friendliness
4.	Weakness:	Inconsistency / Lack of Follow-Through
5.	May not be good at:	Detail work

THE PHLEGMATIC TEMPERAMENT

The Phlegmatic is an introverted, calm, unemotional, easy-going, never-get-upset, person. They are both slow and indirect when responding to others. They are slow to warm-up but will be accommodating in the process. They are by far the easiest person with which to get along.

1.	Primary need:	Accommodate others. They cooperate with others to carry out the task.
2.	Brief description:	Passive, Predictable, Accommodating, Patient
3.	Strength:	Stability
4.	Weakness:	Resistance to change
5.	May not be good at:	Putting pressure on others

THE MELANCHOLY TEMPERAMENT

The Melancholy is an introverted, logical, analytical, factual, private, depression-prone, lets-do-it-right person. They responded to others in a slow, cautious, indirect manner. They are reserved and suspicious until sure of your intentions. They probe for the "hidden meaning" behind your words. They are timid and may appear unsure and have a serious expression.

1.	Primary need:	To do things "right". They want to work with existing circumstances to promote quality in products or service.
2.	Brief description:	Diplomatic, Sensitive, Accurate, Likes Facts
3.	Strength:	Likes to do things "right"
4.	Weakness:	Controlled by the fear of not being "right"
5.	May not be good at:	Taking actions

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For the full descriptions of temperaments, visit **www.RWDigest.com/temperament.pdf**

Knowing Personality Style Can Help Clients Be More Effective in Job Search, Interviews

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• **Melancholy:** thoughtful — too sensitive; detailed — too analytical; quality-oriented — not flexible.

For professionals in the résumé writing industry who utilize the DISC behavioral profiling system, each of the four temperaments corresponds to the "D-I-S-C" pattern as follows:

• "D" (or dominant type) is equivalent to the choleric temperament;
• "I" (or inspirational type) represents the sanguine temperament;
• "S" (or supportive type) refers to the phlegmatic temperament; and
• "C" (or cautious, competent type) is the melancholy temperament.

Temperament is also best described as a "need." Temperament represents dominant needs and therefore cannot be hidden or denied, Hamm said.

The need for Choleric types is to know *what*…to be challenged…to get results. Sanguine types need to know *who*…be with people…have fun. Phlegmatic types need to know *how*…have stability…have a routine. Melancholy types need to know *why*…plan…have privacy.

Hamm suggested three questions to help you quickly determine your clients' temperament, which can help you counsel your clients more effectively.

Ask for an instinctive response to these questions:

• **How do you respond to stress?**

a) Choleric types will respond that they feel angry and explosive.
b) Sanguine types will need to talk or vent.
c) Phlegmatic types feel fatigued or may need extra sleep.
d) Melancholy types will tend to withdraw.

• **What makes you angry?**

a) Choleric types say it's "stupid people" (meaning incompetence).
b) Sanguine types will state "injustice, deception and exclusion."
c) Phlegmatic types will say "pushy, aggressive people."
d) Melancholy types will state "being criticized."

• **For what have you been most criticized?**

e) Choleric types state "being blunt and impatient."
f) Sanguine types will say "talking too much."
g) Phlegmatic types will often say "procrastination" or stubbornness."
h) Melancholy types will state "being too picky, indecisive and not delegating."

"Understanding and appreciating the differences in people can help people get along in the workplace," said Hamm.

"Knowledge of temperaments gives your clients more confidence — and can help you in coaching your clients to be more effective in the interviewing process," he adds.

Mike Fernandes of Résumés and More agreed. "Leroy's information can help us in dealing with our résumé clients and in coaching our clients on how to handle themselves in interviews with prospective employers," he said.

"Learning about the four temperaments is going to aid me in relating to my clients and in turn, hopefully, my clients relating well to interviewers. Having the information about each temperament will enable me to quickly assess the needs of my clients and let me determine how best to work with them," said Sue Edberg of ASDF Word Processing & Résumé Services.

Note: Additional information on temperaments and behavioral profiling include: *Emotions of Normal People* by William Marston, *Understanding the Male Temperament* by Tim LaHaye, *The Personal Profile System* by John G. Geier. Also check out the DISC client assessment tools at **www.profilingpro.com.**

Personality Style and the Answer to "What's Your Greatest Weakness"

Leroy Hamm presented an example of how to turn one of the most dreaded interview questions into a positive statement, showing a prospective employer how the job searcher has learned to work on his or her weaknesses.

The following responses to "What are your weaknesses?" demonstrate how each of the four different temperaments might answer this question during an interview:

Choleric*: "I've been told that one of my weaknesses is a tendency to be impatient at times. However, I've learned to control that to a great degree and to be more patient with people while impatient for results."*

Sanguine: *"I've been told I tend to talk too much, but over time I have learned to stay focused on my goals and objectives. I realize there's a time to talk and a time not to."*

Phlegmatic: *"I've been told that procrastination is a bit of a problem, but I've developed goals and objectives on a yearly basis and also use a day planner. It's been very helpful and effective, and I'm more organized than I've ever been."*

Melancholy: *"I've been told that sometimes I'm a little too picky and am aware that because of my need for perfection that can happen. So, I've become aware of it and keep it in check."*

"People are more comfortable hiring someone they feel is genuine," Hamm explained. "Therefore, I don't believe in whitewashing weaknesses, but instead it's better to present them in an authentic way. It shows that someone has developed control over their temperament."

Book Review: Best Résumés for College Students and New Grads

By Bridget Ann Weide, CPRW

Twelve years ago, I began my career as a résumé writer by writing résumés for high school students. I wish I would have had Louise Kursmark's new book, *Best Résumés for College Students and New Grads* back then.

Now, like most résumé writers with at least a few years experience, organizing the varied education, activities and work experience of these young people comes a lot easier.

But even an old dog can learn new tricks, as I soon discovered. For example, I hadn't thought of using the phrase "Employment While Financing Education" as a section header or "Career Experience" to describe the hodgepodge of part-time, seasonal and temporary work that high school and college students often accumulate.

Innovative ways to handle basic information is the reason why this book deserves to earn a place on your reference bookshelf. It's an "idea guide" that will help jumpstart the writing process when faced with a client who hasn't "done anything" with their life yet.

The book also can "back you up" on critical issues, such as defending against the common résumé myths perpetuated by well-meaning college career departments and uninformed parents and relatives.

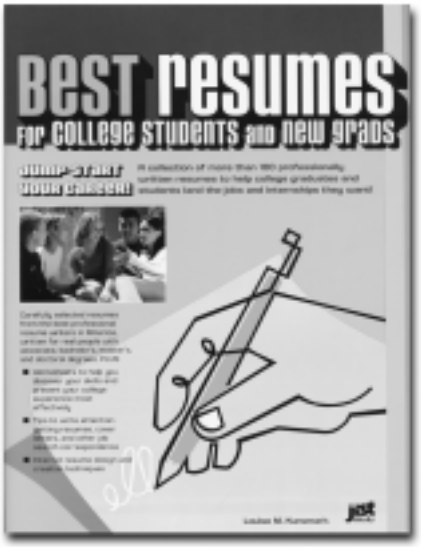
For example, on page 19, Kursmark addresses one of the most common questions, "Does my résumé have to be just one page?" In her response, she notes, "Whereas most new college graduates can fit their most compelling and relevant information onto one page, some simply cannot… and it would be a mistake to try. There are absolutely no rules about résumé length." She goes on to say that the decision should be based on the amount and type of information to be presented.

The next time you're challenged by a client on this subject, you can pull out the "definitive resource" on the subject and defend yourself.

The book also offers an excellent "Résumé Development Worksheet" designed for the student or new graduate. This offers an opportunity to offer a lower-priced résumé development package to targeted individuals if they complete and return the questionnaire. Combined with a brief, 20- to 30-minute consultation, the worksheet is sufficient to capture 90 percent of the information necessary for the résumé.

As with many career resource books, this one is designed for the "do-it-yourselfer." For this reason, some résumé writers might be reluctant to recommend it as a resource for clients who need to do a little more "homework." However, it's likely that at least some of those who purchase the book will recognize that they're not capable of putting together a résumé of the caliber displayed in the book. For this reason, Kursmark includes a contact list of Career Masters Institute members who contributed to the book.

All in all, if you work with entry-level clients, this is a resource that you should own.



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Web Résumés, Web Portfolios and Résumés-on-CD

By Bridget Ann Weide, CPRW

Beyond electronic résumé development, distribution and posting services (covered in "New Developments on the Electronic Horizon" in the September/October 2002 issue of *Résumé Writers' Digest),* there are other new tools and technologies that can help résumé writers help their clients find a job faster and easier.

Web Résumés and Web Portfolios

At its most basic, these formats take the existing content of your client's résumé and place it on a web page. Going a step further, you can expand the existing résumé by including photos, animation, streaming audio, automatic downloading, streaming video, contact forms, hyperlinks and more.

If you're not a web page designer yourself, services such as CareerFolio **(www.CareerFolio.com),** allow you to post your client's web résumé without knowing HTML, and will allow you to access your client's résumé for editing 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Additionally, a CareerFolio can allow prospective employers to download your client's ASCII résumé to their databases directly, saving them a step.

CareerFolio offers a number of different layout formats to choose from (block text followed by bullets, a list of bullets only, block text only and more) and you can experiment with the different formats until you find one that captures your client's needs.

The service also offers an affiliate program for résumé writers to make it a profit center. For more information, visit **www.CareerFolio.com/affadmin**

Write the traditional résumé first, but keep the online format in mind as you write. Where you might only have room for an excerpt from a particularly glowing performance report in an "Endorsements" section on the résumé, you could include a scanned copy of the full letter as a link on the web résumé.

Top web portfolio categories:

- Accomplishments
- Letters of Recommendation
- Work Experience
- Awards
- Education
- Articles Written

Other tips:

- Don't offer web portfolio design services yourself? Find a résumé writer who does and partner up. To find one, do a member search on **www.nrwa.com** and type "web resume" in the search box.
- Include *at least two* download options for your client on the web page (Word, ASCII, RTF, PDF)
- The best fonts for web résumés and portfolios are Arial and Verdana
- The biggest problems with web portfolios, according to the book *EResumes* by Pat Kendall and Susan Britton Whitcomb:

— Wrong choice of categories
— Typos, broken links
— Slow downloads
— Inconsistent formatting
— Too "much"

Résumés-on-CD

Instead of giving your clients a floppy disk, consider providing them with a CD. Not only are disk drives increasingly becoming obsolete, but floppy disks are more unstable for document storage in the long term.

Also consider adding résumés-on-CD as a profit center. Job searchers can give them out at job fairs and mail them to employers and recruiters. There are several sources for business card-sized CD discs that are perfect for this purpose, including:

- CD Digital Card, 2-1/2 by 3-1/2 inch CDs that hold 20 MB of information; approx. $.40 each. **(www.CDDigitalCard.com)**
- 3" Mini CD-R disks. 100-pack for $39.99 (choice of silver or blue). **(www.CD4Sale.com)**
- Business card-sized CDR Ritek discs (50 MB), silver with case. 100-pack for $68.99. **(www.CD4Sale.com)**
- CDR business card start-up kit for $85, including 100 CDRs, 180 inkjet labels, 100 vinyl sleeves and a template for label layout. **(www.MediaSupply.com)**

Tips:

- CD-R is preferable to CD-RW because CD-RW discs can be incompatible with some systems.
- CD burners are inexpensive, ranging from $99 to $149 for PCs and $149 to $249 for Macs.
- It takes one to four minutes to burn a disc, depending on the speed of the CD burner and the size of the files being burned onto the disc.

Future Trends

- **The Decline of the "Big Boards."** More searches will be conducted through individual company web sites or niche portals.
- **Applicants Will Have to Jump Through More Hoops.** Companies will require job searchers to fill out interactive applications to submit in addition to — or in lieu of — a résumé when applying online. (Examples: Gallup and Enterprise Rent-a-Car)
- **Recruiters Opt-Out of Mass Résumé Distribution Services.** We are also ready seeing recruiters who are tired of receiving thousands of "generic" résumés.
- **Job Searchers Fight Back.** Job searchers will try to "trick" applicant screening systems by using techniques like "hidden-text" keywords.
- **Applicant Screening Goes To the Next Level.** We foresee increased use of kiosks with applicant recruitment/screening systems (such as those used by Home Depot). In addition to personality tests, you'll see basic computer proficiency tests and skill tests.
- **The Résumé Has to Be More Than a Piece of Paper.** Clients want to be able to modify their documents themselves. They are also asking for alternative formats (i.e., electronic versions, e-cover letters, web-posting ready versions, etc.)
- **Online Communities of Job Seekers Will Grow.** This will be especially true in certain industries and geographic areas. The trend is an outgrowth of portal sites, *Fast Company* magazine's "Company of Friends" and the mass layoffs at tech companies.

Understanding the Needs of the Post-Retirement Job Searcher

One often-overlooked segment of the job-searching population is the post-retirement individual who is looking for a part-time or consulting position to "bridge" the gap between full-time employment and full-time retirement.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2000, 13 percent of the workforce was 55 and older. By 2015, this figure is expected to rise to 20 percent. The baby boomer generation is just crossing the "age 55 threshold," and advancements in medicine and technology have enabled Americans to live longer, healthier, more productive lives — enabling them to continue in the workforce well past age 65.

In a recent study, *Staying Ahead of the Curve: The AARP Work and Career Study,* the attitudes of these "less traditional" workers is revealed in great depth.

For example, 84 percent of these individuals say they would work even if they were financially set for life. But they are seeking a different type of work, including more flexibility and autonomy. For many, work is "an essential ingredient of good personal well being and positive self-image," as well as a source for post-retirement income — and, increasingly, health benefits.

While 71 percent of those surveyed are "very confident" or "somewhat confident" they could find another job if theirs were eliminated tomorrow, anyone who has worked with a 50+ job searcher who was downsized knows that the process takes a huge toll on the person.

An opportunity for résumé writers (and career coaches) is to help these individuals define a path to their new workstyle. Creating a targeted résumé can help them define the skills they most want to utilize during the time of transition — and coaching can help them reach these goals.

For more information about the study, visit **www.aarp.org.**

RÉSUMÉ WRITER'S UNIVERSITY

– Brought to you by the Professional Résumé Writing & Research Association –

Exploiting the Power of a Cover Letter

By Donna Andreacchi, CRW Candidate

Contrasted with its humble beginnings — a benign list of employers, job titles, employment dates, personal information and references — today's résumé is a dynamic, results-oriented document highlighting qualifications, skills, accomplishments and credentials that recruiters and employers review when selecting applicants to meet company needs.

What is less obvious — and, unfortunately, often overlooked — is the equally important role of the cover letter. But, as leaders in the industry will assure you, the power of the cover letter is catching on!

Mundane at best, the purpose of a cover letter was to provide a polite, formal introduction to the résumé — a tradition that remained unchallenged and, subsequently, unchanged for years. To put this in perspective: what was okay then is no longer. The cover letter revolution is upon us! The new challenge is to free ourselves from tradition and find ways to exploit its power.

A well-written cover letter is a powerful marketing tool that works in concert with the résumé. Together, they form a strong sales package. However, the distinction between the two documents has not always been clear. As the cover letter evolved, it commonly contained information copied directly from the résumé. Today, each document has its own role. Simply stated, it is this: the résumé describes the product; the cover letter provides the sales pitch.

Before proceeding, you may be both surprised and disappointed to learn that writing a good cover letter can easily take as much time as writing a good résumé. You will need to research the targeted company's mission, management, policies and goals to communicate a credible understanding of their needs and, more importantly, show by example how your client is custom fit for the job.

It's easy to see this can be a time-consuming process, but the payback is great. Aside from getting the client the interview, doing the homework early will give your client the jump start he or she needs to prepare for it.

Presently, there's an abundance of well-qualified applicants with strong résumés eager to fill most jobs. Keeping this in mind as you write will help you stay focused by challenging you to show how your client is better than his or her competitors.

Equally important is to consider the difficult task employers face in choosing the applicant who will provide the biggest bang for their buck. Wouldn't you rather have something tailor-made than taken off the shelf? So would the employer. Can he really be sure he selects the best fit for his company based on résumés alone? You get the picture. If there ever was a golden opportunity to beat the competition, the time has come — you and your clients must be prepared to exploit the power of the cover letter.

Facing writer's block? Look to reference books for inspiration. *Cover Letter Magic* by WendyEnelow and Louise Kursmark is an outstanding reference, but it is one of many resources.

If you're ready to get started, wait just a minute! You need to make sure your sales skills are up to speed. The ultimate goal is to sell your client. No matter how you analyze it, in the

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The Cover Letter Can Help Clients 'Close the Sale' to Win an Interview

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employer's eyes, your client is the product for sale. If he decides to buy, he'll offer an interview as a down payment.

It's really simple if you remember this: the goal of the cover letter is always the same — to land your clients an interview — and the strategy always involves salesmanship.

Now you're ready to position your client ahead of the competition and make the employer's job easier by showing him what he's paying for. Here are six tips to keep you from straying off course and help you avoid common pitfalls.

1. **Keep the cover letter to one hard-hitting page**. You can be brief and concise and still make your point.
2. **Address the employer's needs, not your client's**. Expounding on superfluous qualifications may feed your client's ego, but does nothing for the employer, short of losing his interest.
3. **Don't cheat to compete!** You may not think of it as such, but exaggeration is nothing less. Today's seasoned employer will spot puffery immediately. Make sure your client can back up everything you write with quantifiable examples.
4. **Knowledge is power**. Provide specific information you know about the company addressing the experience and credentials that will provide solutions for their unique challenges.
5. **Make it personal — pay a sincere compliment**. Ask your client what he or she finds attractive about this particular company that led him or her to apply for employment.
6. **End with a call to action.** Be direct in asking for what your client wants — an interview! This is what it's all about.

THE POPULARITY GAME:
Do Your Customers Like You?

By Diana C. LeGere

Notice how some people just light up a room? The moment they appear, they are greeted warmly and people gravitate toward them. Others are cast off, and no matter what they say, people do not respond.

What's even more astonishing is the fact that it doesn't matter if we are rich or poor, beautiful or disfigured, thin or overweight; it doesn't matter what our ethnic background is or whether we are married or single. Being popular has nothing to do with any of that. To be a "people magnet," the only essential prerequisite is that we must *like* people!

If you want your customers to like you, you must like your customers. But is that realistic? Can we *really* like all our customers? We can if we begin to look at them as people first. One thing is certain: if our customers are comfortable around us, they will like us. If they like us, we want to be around them. The cycle begins!

Connecting on a Personal Level: Building Rapport

When you initiate contact with a client, whether in person or on the phone, that client doesn't really know if they are going to conduct business with you or not. They hope to, but will actually make a definite decision based on how they *feel* when they are with you. It will not matter "what" you say, but more importantly, "how" you say it.

Credentials are irrelevant. Yes, your credentials are an important element of your expertise, but just as we help our clients to be *"perceived"* as the best candidate, we must be perceived as the best résumé writer. We can possess all the certifications in the industry, but if we are thoughtless and mechanical and people do not like us, it simply will not matter.

Any sales executive can testify that customers are willing to pay double the price and drive 50 miles out of their way to be with a salesperson who makes them feel special.

Paul R. Timm, Ph.D., author of *50 Powerful Ideas You Can Use to Keep Your Customers,* reminds us that the most powerful way to prosper in a slow-growth economy is to enhance our customer service.

"A great attitude — especially one of gratitude for customers — is the single most important ingredient in exceptional public contact employees," Timm says.

Begin taking the advantage in the *"popularity game"* by allowing your customer to take the lead in communication. By doing this, you can easily identify a common ground for an effective exchange of ideas. Remember that *listening* and *hearing* are *not* the same. You may hear what someone says, but that doesn't mean you are focused on what they are *saying*. Be sure to listen for unspoken words.

To truly *listen,* you must be engaged in the conversation, which means you must be actively involved. You become aware of a customer's tone of voice so you can clearly understand what they are *feeling* and respond accordingly.

Nothing is more annoying than speaking to someone from the heart only to receive a superficial reaction.

According to Nicholas Boothman, author of *How to Make People Like You in*

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Liking, Trust are Keys to More Effective Client Relationships

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90 Seconds or Less, your ability to establish rapport will depend on your attitude, your ability to synchronize behavior such as body language and voice tone, your conversation skills and your ability to discover whether your customer uses visual, auditory or kinesthetic senses.

"Once you become adept in these four areas," Boothman says, "you will be able to quickly connect and establish rapport with anyone you choose at any time."

With that in mind, we should be able to pick our customers!

Building a rapport is easy when we connect ourselves to others. We do this by showing others we are truly interested in them. We "identify" — we empathize with them and understand how they must feel. We might not be without a job right now as we prepare to develop Bill's résumé, but we can certainly understand how Bill feels. We know that if we were out of work, we would be worrying about the same issues — our kids, paying the rent and possibly depleting our savings. So we appreciate why Bill is really particular about his résumé and why he wants it "his" way. His life is on the line! Yes, we are the experts, but it's Bill's future we are steering.

The minute Bill believes you care about *his* life; you can depend on his unwavering *trust* of what you have to offer. He will be *your* customer and he will definitely like you.

Everyone is Different

We must understand that just as no two people are identical, no two customers are alike. We can't look at our customers and categorize them. Jack is an *"executive client"* and Bill is a *"techie."* It might very well be that our *"techie"* Bill has all the traits of a true executive and is nothing like any of the high-tech clients you serviced in the past. And we might have the tendency to assume that because Mary is a woman, her needs might be somewhat different than Jack's. Of course that's true, but not at all because she is a woman — but rather because she is Mary.

Take the time to look at each of your clients as unique individuals and find the positive characteristic of each one. Everyone has something truly magnificent about him or her. Try to survey life through their perspective, remembering that no viewpoint is better, just different.

To truly connect to your client, you must let them see that you sincerely *notice* that they are different! And once you do, they must feel confident that you will be able to treat them differently because of it.

No one wants a *"one-size-fits-all"* shirt any more than they want pre-determined service based on stereotype. A customer who wants that breed of résumé service would probably be satisfied to purchase résumé software and produce a résumé from a selection of templates.

So what is it that allows us to connect with our clients so they will like us? The secret is: Don't say much. Talk about half as much as you listen. (God gave us two ears for a reason.)

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Are You in *Agreement?:* Noun/Pronoun Principles Revisited

By Sharon Pierce-Williams, M.Ed., CPRW

While thinking about a grammar topic for this issue of *Résumé Writers' Digest*, I perused e-mails and college essays to find that this issue's column should clearly be a review of noun/pronoun agreement.

While e-mails are considered informal communication and the *conscious* use of slang, lower case letters and/or less punctuation is acceptable, pronoun/antecedent disagreement could be an *unconscious* slip-up.

You are probably thinking, "How boring!" Since business writers use pronouns to add variety and interest to their writing, it is important that pronouns are used properly and … keep in mind, "It's what you learn *after* you know it all that counts!"

Take the following quiz to see if your noun/pronoun agreement skills are up to snuff. If you score a 100 percent, then you have earned the right to move on to the next RWD article!

Review of Noun/Pronoun Agreement Principles

A pronoun that represents the subject must agree in three ways (1) in number, (2) in gender and (3) in clear relationship.

- In **number.** When the antecedent (the noun replaced by the pronoun) is singular, the pronoun has to be singular. Likewise, when the antecedent is plural, the pronoun has to be plural. (Note: Words like *each, every, a person, everyone, something, anybody, neither* and *either* require singular pronouns).

★ *Bryce* was asked to submit ***his*** CPRW exam within three days.
★ *Evelyn and Jean* were asked to submit ***their*** résumés for possible employment.
★ *The company* participated in community functions to create an awareness of **its** concern for the environment.
★ Would *every CMI member* please be sure to send ***his or her*** dues before Dec. 31.
★ *Either Kevin or Frank* will sell **his** quota this year.
★ *Jill and Deborah* will sell **their** quotas this month.

- In **gender.** The issue of gender-neutral pronouns has arisen in response to treating females and males as equals. Occasionally, we are faced with the dilemma of choosing a pronoun that refers to both.

★ *Each manager* must make up (his, her) mind about stocking this item and about the quantity that (he, she) can sell.

Let's think about this one! Not all managers are men, nor are all managers women. We could say *his or her (he and she)* and this is perfectly acceptable, but after a couple of times, it becomes annoying to read. Should we say … "*Each manager* … must make up *their* minds …?" (No, *each* is singular) or "*Each manager* must make up *its* minds*?"* (No, *it* **never** refers to people).

The best solution would be to rewrite the sentence to read, "Each manager must decide whether to…" or "Managers must make up *their* minds…"

- In **clear relationship.** Well-placed pronouns prevent confusion.

★ **Confusing**: Jean Williams sent Pat Pierce her sales figures for the previous year. *She* thought they were too high. (Who thought the figures were too high, Jean or Pat?)

★ **Confusing**: Scott spoke with Greg, and *he* said the proposal would work. (Who said the proposal would work, Scott or Greg?)

If the reader knew the business relationships of the people above, he or she might be able to determine what the writer is trying to convey. Even with this advantage, however, the wrong message could be sent. The best way to

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Circle the correct pronoun choice and <u>underline</u> the antecedent to which the pronoun refers.

1. Each woman received a bonus for *(her / their)* efforts.
2. Neither the accountant nor the auditor presented *(his or her / their)* views in writing.
3. The corporation has already applied for a permit to build *(its / their)* new factory.
4. Every employee must have *(his or her / their)* identification card renewed.
5. All of the clerks and secretaries stated *(his or her / their)* preferences.
6. Mark, rather than Larry, had *(his / their)* suggestions accepted.
7. Mr. Pierce and Ms. Iglehart, in addition to President Ross, will present *(his / their)* ideas.
8. Mr. Pierce, as well as others, should offer *(his / their)* suggestions.
9. Either Erin or Jill will extend *(her / their)* congratulations to the winners.
10. What does a student do when someone writes *(his or her / their)* essay and then they can't write a decent paper for class?
11. It still comes down to the same principle of the applicant expressing *(his or her / their)* qualifications for consideration.
12. The group is conducting *(its / their)* training sessions on Saturdays.

Quiz Answers:

1. her	2. his or her	3. its	4. his or her
5. their	6. his	7. their	8. his
9. her	10. his or her	11. his or her	12. its

Secrets of Creating Successful Client Interactions

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Making People Like You

Is there a strategy, then, to make a customer like you? Yes.

Obviously people are not really warmhearted toward those who don't like them.

Would you be overjoyed to invite your neighbor for dinner if you knew they did not like you? I don't think so. But what if you thought they treasured your companionship? You immediately feel warm around someone who gives you a gesture of fondness. Why? Because it makes us feel important. What matters most to us is *ourselves.*

Seek advice from your customer before you give them your advice. Of course, they came to you for help, but remember, everyone in the world can do something better than you can.

That goes for résumé writing too. There likely is a résumé writer who writes better than you, which is why being "liked" really matters.

Discover what your client does better than you. Be enthusiastic about what they can do for you! Find something you admire about them — be genuine.

Discover a common bond that you share. There is something that we can unearth which attaches us to everyone we meet. Possibly the attachment is a school or neighborhood. Perhaps your father is an engineer just like Tom, or it might be something as simple as your mutual preference for dungarees!

Take notes while you talk, especially if you are on the phone. This demonstrates that you are entirely focused on your customer and care about what they are saying.

An excellent idea I discovered years ago was to create *"anything"* files about contacts and clients. After I conclude a meeting, while the information is fresh in my mind, I write down *everything* I remember about that person. I keep this information handy so that I can respond to, or mention some of these things, at a follow-up meeting.

When I am on the phone with this client, I grab their file and ask them a follow-up question about a topic they mentioned in the last encounter. Wow, can you imagine the response? Try it — your customers will be amazed when they realize you were listening so well during the meeting that you can still remember their unique circumstances despite the fact you have many other clients. Doing this will substantiate the fact that you are earnest and sincerely care about them as individuals.

Look your customer in the eyes. They say eyes are the "windows to the soul." Articulate from your heart. Mirror what they say and address each customer's concern. Show a genuine interest. The difference between a heartfelt compliment and insincere flattery is in the content.

Rather than saying, "You look great today, Mary," instead say, "Mary, I just love how that blue suit brings out your eyes."

A sincere compliment will tell the receiver that you notice them on a personal level. And don't forget one of the simplest gestures — a smile.

Be like them! Match their mannerisms, tone of speech, gestures, etc. Remember, people like others who resemble them. Use their name often. People love the sound of their name.

Look for clues to determine if your customer is using visual, auditory or ki-

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What Smart Customer Service Experts Know!

1. *Time* is the best investment. The more time you spend with a client, the easier it is to make them like you.
2. Positive attitudes make the difference.
3. Customers expect you to entertain them. Make the experience memorable.
4. Keep the dialogue going and know when to change the subject!
5. Laughter is contagious! Keep a few jokes and stories handy for all occasions.

10 Steps to Likeable Customer Service

1. Remember and use their name often.
2. Care about them on a personal level.
3. Focus on them at all times — *look, smile* and *listen.*
4. Give the gift of confidence — know about your service.
5. Be knowledgeable about industry trends.
6. Use *their* time wisely.
7. Be flexible for needs rather than having a *"because it's policy"* attitude.
8. Remember they are guests — be polite and welcome them.
9. Take an extra step to be there for your client.
10. Customers shouldn't have to work. Make it easy to do business with you!

Correct Noun/Pronoun Agreement Will Reduce Confusion

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clarify an ambiguous pronoun is to rewrite the sentence.

★ **Clear**: Jean Williams sent her sales figures for the previous year to Pat Pierce. Pat thought they were too high.

★ **Clear**: Scott spoke with Greg, and Greg said the proposal would work.

In conclusion, most writers make a small number of grammatical errors repeatedly and simply need a review of the basics.

A firm grasp of the basics will help build the professional image you want to create with everything you write.

— Sharon Pierce-Williams, owner of The Résumé.Doc., is a Certified Professional Résumé Writer (CPRW), and a member of the Professional Association of Résumé Writers (PARW) and Career Masters Institute (CMI). Sharon holds BSBA and M.Ed. degrees from Bowling Green State University and, for the last nine years, has served as a college instructor in Northwest Ohio. She is a featured columnist on the topic of effective business communications for Résumé Writers' Digest.

Job Search Strategies: Legal Professionals

In the law world, Martindale-Hubbell **(www.martindale.com)** is one of the most respected names around, so it's no surprise that their web site enjoys a similar reputation.

This web site's job search section is powered by Law.com and is updated daily. It's a great resource for attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, librarians and other legal professionals. In addition, "The Lawyer Locator" feature allows job candidates to research prospective employers.

You'll also find salary and compensation data for law firms and corporate law departments.

Bonus: The site also offers free e-mail services for your clients "in transition."

Find Law **(www.findlaw.com),** is a web site resource for consumers as well as legal professionals. The careers section of the web site offers several nifty resources, including a directory of legal recruiters (searchable by firm name as well as by state) and salary charts.

This wouldn't be an article about lawyers if it didn't include some fine print: Remember, when you recommend a career web site to your client, you can't control what information — aside from job listings —is presented to him and her. For example, in perusing the web site for Attorney Jobs Online, **(www.attorneyjobs.com),** their Résumé Center includes the following tip:

- **Write it yourself.** Only you know who you are. No one else can get inside your head sufficiently to represent you to employers. This does not mean that you cannot seek advice. Just don't let anyone else do the hard work of writing the words on the document for you.

That one tip isn't enough to leave the web site off the "recommended" list, but it does temper what is otherwise an excellent resource for not just full-time positions, but also "pro tem" part-time and consulting jobs.

Several sites also offer job listings for both U.S. and international positions.

One of the best of these is the Counsel Network **(www.headhunt.com).** The site, which "specializes exclusively in lawyer career opportunities, information and resources," is operated by a Canadian lawyer recruitment and career consulting firm. Of particular interest on this site are their tools, which include a personal home page, career newsletter and personal job agent.



On the downside: Like several industry-specific web sites, there is a hidden "motive" — in this case, retaining the services of the sponsoring company. That said, despite the firm's stated focus on "career consulting," the "sample résumé" on the site is particularly unimpressive. Some of the listings also seemed a bit "stale," dating back four or five months. For best (and most recent) results, search "all jobs."

■ Featured Sites

American Corporate Counsel Association
http://jobline.acca.com/

Attorney Jobs Online
www.attorneyjobs.com

Canadian Bar Association
www.cba.org/career/careersite.asp

Counsel Network
www.headhunt.com/

eAttorney
www.eAttorney.com

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Law Bulletin
www.lawbulletin.com/class_main.cfm

Law Forum
www.lawforum.net/employ.htm

Law Guru.com
http://lawguru.legalstaff.com/

Law Info.com
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Law Jobs
www.lawjobs.com/

Legal Staff.com
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Martindale.com
www.Martindale.com/xp/Martindale/Legal_Careers/careers_intro.xml

Action Marketing: Don't Resist Change — Create It

By Robert Middleton

As I was hiking the trails of Yosemite recently, I was inspired by the towering spires of Yosemite. They are a reminder that most things in our lives and our businesses are very impermanent compared to this awesome natural monument.

But we usually don't act as if that's the truth. We settle on one way of doing something and we often stick with it long after it has served its useful life. We go along blissfully, thinking everything's fine — when it's actually falling apart.

This is true in our relationships, our physical well-being, our financial situation and, of course, our businesses. We resist change often simply because change is uncomfortable.

I think it's not only useful but absolutely essential that we as Independent Professionals completely rethink our premise for being in business — not just occasionally, but as a regular practice. We need to create change.

Ask yourself:

"What is my business really about? What am I really selling? What are my clients really buying? Am I communicating this message with authenticity or am I just hoping nobody notices that I really have no clue?"

This willingness to clear the slate and ask these hard questions is not a comfortable pursuit. It's downright annoying, in fact, especially if it means going back and retooling your marketing message and web site to reflect your most current thinking about what it is you truly offer.



Robert Middleton

Nevertheless it's a practice I recommend. If you truly do want to make more of a difference with the work you do, it starts and ends with the truth. That's the best marketing of all.

So here are some ideas on "Creating Change" in your résumé writing business:

- **If it's not broken — break it!** Simply stop settling for the old status quo and start questioning everything about your business. If you look closely, I'll bet that you'll find plenty that you can change for the better.
- **Creating change is win-win for both you and your clients.** You'll be constantly challenging yourself to find what really works, not what you think or hope works. Your clients benefit from that kind of resourcefulness. And they'll pay you more handsomely for it as well.
- **Invest in new technology and push it to the limit.** I never thought I needed a laptop because I'm in my office during working hours and clients come to me. But then I realized that my most creative ideas come to me when I'm *not* in the office.
- **Don't settle for someone else's model — including mine.** It's great to get good ideas from authors, coaches and consultants, but for goodness sake, don't copy their ideas verbatim or you'll never catch up to them. Add your own spin to their ideas.
- **Master something you're afraid of.** It's easy to spend all your time doing what comes easy. I'm not talking about spending tons of energy working on your weak areas. That only results in a lot of "weak strengths." But by breaking out of your mold once in a while, you'll gain valuable insights that you can apply to your core competency.

— *You can find more resources to market your résumé writing business at Robert Middleton's web site,* ***www.actionplan.com***

Try to Understand Your Client's Motivating Factor

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nesthetic senses. This is their motivating factor.

Studies have shown that as many as 55 percent of all people in our culture are motivated primarily by what they see (visual), 15 percent by what they hear (auditory) and 30 percent by physical sensation (kinesthetic).

"If the person you meet sees, hears or feels the world in a different way from yours," Booth says, "you need to learn how to recognize that fact and how to adapt and tune in to his or her wavelength to establish rapport that can lead to a meaningful friendship or relationship."

Ask open-ended questions rather than those that will elicit "yes" or "no" answers. This is much like the old adage: *junk in, junk out*. Ask better questions and you will get better answers.

Keep your thoughts focused on the customer. Now is not the time to worry if you will get done before lunch so you can order that case of copy paper that goes off sale tomorrow!

Communication is the single most important skill we can master and, likewise, the most essential element in great customer service. Part of that communication is being able to provide our customers with assurance that they are doing the "right thing." We need to tell them that they made the correct decision and be credible by offering solid examples of our knowledge and giving them confidence in us.

From this day forward, make a conscious effort to make your customers feel special. Give them confidence in what you can do, and make their experience memorable.

— Diana C. LeGere is a freelance writer and President of Executive Final Copy, ***www.executivefinalcopy.com.*** *She specializes in motivational topics and business writing for executives. LeGere has been published nationally in several career-related publications.*

Impressions: Taking Stock and Setting Goals

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Louise Kursmark

The end of the year is a great time to review where you've been and decide where you're going. A year-end business review will help you pinpoint the activities that were most effective in building your business the prior year — and those that had disappointing results or created more headaches than benefits.

Every business is different, and we all use different benchmarks to evaluate our growth and progress. Here are some of the things that I look at — and why — that may give you ideas as you take a good hard look at the year 2002 and set goals for 2003:

• **Marketing ROI.** What's the return-on-investment of my various marketing strategies? How much business did my Yellow Pages ad generate? My web site? These analyses are pretty straightforward — total up the business generated by each source, divide by the financial investment, and figure out how much I got back for each dollar I spent. For some other strategies, the ROI analysis is not as clear cut. For instance, what's the true "cost" of writing an article for an online web site or building a recruiter relationship? For these types of activities, I simply try to evaluate whether the return was worth my investment of time.



• **Sources of business.** Where does my business come from? By tracking this information in my client database, I can quickly categorize each source of business as a percent of the total. If too large a percentage of business is coming from any one source, I can work to bring up the other areas to create a better-balanced business, less likely to suffer ups and downs at the whim of that one central source.

• **Dollar volume of initial sale.** I like to keep tabs on the dollar amount each client spends in the initial sale…and drive this amount up each year! I can do this by increasing fees for my primary service (résumé writing) and/or by selling more add-on services as part of the initial sale. Since I choose to remain a one-person business, this is the only way to continue to grow my revenues and my profitability — while at the same time providing a menu of valuable services to help my clients in their job transitions.

The last week of the year, between Christmas and New Year's, is usually pretty quiet in the résumé-writing business. In addition to performing my business review, I like to use that week to tackle time-consuming but important projects so that I get the new year off to a good start. For instance…

• **Web-site update**. Review, edit and update content…add new testimonials…refresh the sample résumés…describe new services I've introduced…check every link.

• **Software skills development.** Learn and practice new techniques in Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, PageMaker or any other software I own…perhaps complete a class, online tutorial or personal coaching session from a colleague who's a real expert. My goal — to get more value from my considerable investment in technology.

• **Office cleaning.** It's amazing how much "stuff" accumulates over the course of a year! I got a head start on this project this year and have already purged my office of tons of outdated software manuals, ancient newsletters and magazines and obsolete clip-art books and disks. Next I'll tackle some of my "piles" and "stacks" to see what I can toss, use or file.

Wow! My office looks great, my goals for the year are set (in writing), and I'm ready to hit the ground running on the first work day of the new year. Why don't you try some end-of-year reviewing, goal-setting and de-cluttering? You might be amazed at how virtuous, productive and motivated you'll feel — all set for a fantastic 2003.

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