

CareerSmart Advisor™

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

A Note From Dave

I'd like to thank the many who responded to our annual survey of the executive job market. We've analyzed the data and the 14th annual *Executive Job Market Intelligence Report* is nearly done. In fact, it should be enclosed with an upcoming issue of *CareerSmart Advisor*.



I won't spoil the surprises that are contained within the report; but suffice it to say, the findings reveal that a strong executive recruiting season is underway. This is a trend that we saw among search firm professionals at the close of 2005, and the latest data confirms the flurry of recruiter activity.

ExecuNet's Recruiter Confidence Index and Search Firm Hiring Index, which are leading indicators of the executive job market, were at peak levels in the last months of 2005. Confidence that the executive employment market would improve in the next three months topped nearly 70 percent, and the number of search firms that were hiring reached record levels.

The newest data is even more optimistic — 81 percent of recruiters now expect improvement in the executive job market in the next quarter. Their confidence is supported by the 26 percent growth in assignments they saw in 2005 — more than twice 2004's figures and well over six times their search assignment growth in 2003.

All this action bodes well for executives, sending strong signals for the coming year. The recruiters are gearing up for the talent war and executives who begin to well-position themselves now are likely to emerge victorious in new positions.

Sincerely,

Dave

Dave Opton
 Founder & CEO
 ExecuNet

Changing Careers: Determining Which Path to Take

By Marji McClure

The reasons for a career change are driven by either push factors (when you're pushed to do something, such as when your company is moving, there is a management change or a shift in philosophies) or pull factors (incentives, for instance, getting called by recruiters with a new opportunity), says Dennis Krieger, managing partner of The Entrepreneur's Source.

Experts agree that, once you determine that a career change is imminent, you need to create a game plan and have a strong support system in place. "Realize that the best chance to succeed requires your asking for help," says Meg Montford, chief coaching officer of Abilities Enhanced and ExecuNet meeting facilitator in Kansas City. "Going it alone usually doesn't work, there's too much confusion to muddle through. Dumping it all on a spouse or partner just frightens them and creates more stress for all."

Help can come in many forms, from your list of reliable networking sources to a career coach trained to help you uncover the new path your career should take. Peter McCarthy, president of Washington, DC-area McCarthy & Company and facilitator of ExecuNet's networking meetings, stresses the importance of utilizing your network and enlisting the guidance of a coach as you begin the career change process. "If you're looking for a similar job at a different company, you know what you want," says McCarthy. "But if you're unhappy with what you're doing, you need someone to help show how your skills transfer [to a new career]."

"Develop your own 'board of advisors' to act as discrete intermediaries on your behalf," adds McCarthy. That board should be comprised

What Percent of Searches Were Filled by Candidates From Outside the Client Company's Industry?

	Search Firm Professionals	Corporate Recruiters
2005	14%	16%
2004	18%	19%
2003	14%	15%

Source: ExecuNet

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FastTrack Programs —
March 2006
Hosted by Dave Opton,
founder and CEO, ExecuNet

- 3/7 — **Guerrilla Marketing For Job Hunters**
— David Perry
- 3/9 — **B2B Relationships Begin P2P**
— Steve Conner
- 3/15 — **Converting Interviews to Offers with DISC**
— Linda Dominguez
- 3/21 — **How to Land the Job You Want When You're
Over 50** — Jean Walker
- 3/22 — **Warm Up to Cold Calling**
— Nick Papadopoulos
- 3/23 — **Seven Steps To A Great Executive Resume**
— Louise Kursmark

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Networking Meetings —
March 2006
Hosted by ExecuNet Facilitators

- 3/7 — **San Diego** — Mark James & Rob Vickery
- 3/8 — **Stamford** — Howard S. Bader
- 3/8 — **Cleveland Sr. Executive Roundtable**
— Rick Taylor
- 3/9 — **Columbia, MD** — Ed Loucks
- 3/9 — **Pittsburgh** — Vince Papi
- 3/9 — **Atlanta Sr. Executive Roundtable**
— J. Patrick Haly
- 3/10 — **Parsippany, NJ** — Nancy Hutter & Linsey Levine
- 3/10 — **Tampa Bay** — Gina Potito
- 3/10 — **Seattle Sr. Executive Roundtable**
— Susan Stringer
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- 3/13 — **Detroit** — Marge Larsen
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- 3/14 — **Sacramento** — Wilcox Miller & Nelson
- 3/14 — **Seattle** — Susan Stringer
- 3/15 — **Portland** — Jean Walker
- 3/15 — **Philadelphia Sr. Executive Roundtable**
— Ed Kelleher
- 3/15 — **Philadelphia** — Ed Kelleher
- 3/16 — **Minneapolis** — John Wetzal & Barbara Adams
- 3/16 — **Washington, DC** — Peter McCarthy
- 3/16 — **Southern Wisconsin** — Clara Hurd Nydam
- 3/20 — **Tarrytown, NY (Tri-State Area)**
— Nancy Hutter & Linsey Levine
- 3/20 — **Boston Sr. Executive Roundtable**
— Pam Lassiter
- 3/21 — **Cleveland** — Rick Taylor
- 3/21 — **Irvine, CA (Orange County)** — Mark James
- 3/21 — **Hartford** — Howard S. Bader
- 3/21 — **Wilmington, DE** — Russ Dunn & Rick Hays
- 3/21 — **Houston** — Cecelia Rose
- 3/21 — **Washington, DC Sr. Executive Roundtable**
— Peter McCarthy

Registration information can be found at members.execunet.com/e_network_results.cfm

:: Noteworthy

Job Search SWOT Analysis

By Robyn Greenspan

We're three months into the new year and if you are still powering forward on your resolutions — congratulations.

While gym enrollments skyrocket at the turn of the year, a membership card alone won't help the pounds melt, the skin tighten and the muscles bulge, but an action plan that parses out time for the gym and an appropriate food plan will be more likely to guarantee success.

It's not enough to resolve to get that great new job in 2006. A strategy will get you there faster — any time of year. And a strategy that is realistically crafted has an even higher probability of success. A strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats analysis can serve as the architecture not only for a job search strategy, but as a tool for personal success.

Here's how to begin:

Strengths: Strong tools — résumé, portfolio, digital presentation — are important but so are the attributes that make you a viable candidate. Many of these traits are ones that you already know; in fact, many of the adjectives are on your marketing materials and in your elevator speech. Make a separate list of your strengths and find examples for each characteristic. This exercise will help you to reinforce qualities while creating interview stories that demonstrate your core competencies.

Weaknesses: There's a reason why

this portion of the analysis is positioned in second place in the SWOT chain — you need the confidence of the previous exercise to fortify your ego for this one. If it helps the mental process, think about these weak traits as unrecognized or partially developed talents that can be elevated into constructive qualities. Ground some of this analysis in reality — there are some things that you're never going to be strong in, no matter how hard you try. You can, however, work on them enough to minimize any damage they can potentially cause.

Opportunities: There are tangible and intangible elements here. First, get out your calendar and identify and schedule any networking meetings or industry events that put you in the right places with the right people. The second place where opportunities happen is in your head. You know that cliché, "Think outside the box?" Okay, the box is your head and you need to find ways to connect your skills with the people that can help you become professionally satisfied.

Threats: Competition, demoralization, industry contractions, outsourcing, the list goes on and on. Anything that stands in the way of you and that great job can be seen as a threat. Or, you can look at them as obstacles that you have to overcome, challenges, or things that need creative problem-solving. Separate the legitimate threats from the obstacles and the list will shorten. ■

Executives Rank the Activities that Have Been Most Important to their Careers:

1. Routinely build network outside company and with industry/trade contacts
2. Develop leadership skills
3. Continue to expand technical/functional expertise
4. Increase visibility with industry groups
5. Work "all out" at current job
6. Routinely network with recruiters
7. Develop people management skills
8. Seek out developmental assignments
9. Routinely network inside company to raise visibility
10. Develop people management skills

Source: ExecuNet

Your Career Advisor

Creating Success: Put Yourself in the Position You Really Want

By Joyce K. Reynolds

Generally speaking, there are three types of people in the world: people who make things happen; people who watch things happen; and people who wonder what happened. While we'd all like to think we fit the first category, the truth is that most of us have a tendency to live quite randomly. Unfortunately, this easily leads us to the place we don't want to be — wondering just what became of our dreams, goals and good intentions. More specifically, one day we might just wake up asking ourselves what happened to that ideal job or career we dreamed of or always wanted.

Ironically, many of us get waylaid from our true desires because we're on the wrong track, but moving fast. We've been slipstreamed to the top of a profession we may be good at but don't love. Others battle with underlying factors like self-sabotage or limited belief systems that keep us from achieving the business success we really want. But most of us fail to reach our ideal, simply because we don't identify it, write it down, and take actions that will make it happen. In other words — all financial and status success aside — unless we create a plan to set and reach goals that keep us aiming at our career objectives, we'll most likely wind up doing something less than our best.

If you're struggling with your job or just not sure what you want to do next, start by suspending your current reality and letting yourself get excited about future possibilities. Decide that no matter how far down the wrong road you've gone, you're willing to turn back. That's when you stop wondering what happened and start making things happen.

Whether you're out of a job or in one that's just not satisfying, now's the time to create the plan that will help put you in the exact position you really want. As you begin, consider the following: at least 70

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percent of available jobs are unadvertised; even more important, a whopping 90 percent of all jobs are won through networking activities. In other words, don't expect to find your ideal position by joining the masses in answering ads on Monster.com. Instead, understand that you will reach your highest goal by identifying what you really want; positioning yourself to claim it by organizing a plan around specifics; methodologically managing your process; and ensuring you have arranged for support for your goals along the way.

The steps to getting where you want:

1. Specify your primary objective and organize your activities by developing a clear plan of action with daily commitments, goals and timelines.
2. Write out — unedited and in full detail — a description of the position that will allow you to maximize your talents and fulfill your ideals, including title and salary.
3. Identify the experience/talents/skills and personal values you possess that will support the position. (This will keep you honest in your search.)
4. Determine and articulate what differentiates you from others with regard to the position you seek.
5. Based on this information, develop a targeted, superior résumé that includes a thorough list of your pertinent accomplishments.
6. Identify the most qualified companies in locations that are of interest to you that would have such a position — regardless of whatever job vacancy or hiring mode they may or may not be in.
7. Create a list of all contacts in your network that might help you make personal contact with identified companies. Note: Focus on connecting

with people who can influence the hiring decision.

8. Decide per contact how you will proceed via phone, e-mail or letter, and communicate a compelling reason for them to meet with you. (It would be of mutual benefit because...)
9. Present your interest from the viewpoint of knowing that you have value and are entitled to introduce yourself for consideration.
10. Practice due diligence by becoming thoroughly familiar with companies before you visit them. Be prepared to speak knowledgeably about what the company stands for and how it impacts your interest in them.
11. Continue to refine and embellish your list of companies and contacts until you connect with the company that realizes it's been waiting for you.

Operate from the understanding that companies are always on the lookout for exceptional talent and will welcome the right individual whether or not they are in a formal job search. Be specific about the special skills or qualifications you bring to an organization and articulate how you will help to achieve the goals you know they want to fulfill. The more thoughtful you are in your approach, and the more targeted and direct you are about what you are looking for and why the person you've contacted will benefit from meeting with you, the more impact you will have and the closer you will be to finding your ideal position.

When you approach employers for a specific position that you have identified and chosen, you demonstrate that you are innovative, creative and appropriately self-confident. When you back up your interest

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of people who will tell you the truth (and does not typically include family members), says Jean Erickson Walker, Ed.D., CMF, a professional effectiveness coach, author, career counselor and management consultant in Portland who also facilitates networking meetings for ExecuNet. “You need to be the leader of your life and need others to help manage that effectively,” says Walker.

Take a Look Inside

Once you know you have the support of those around you, it’s time to focus on yourself. “What I have found in my coaching practice is that the base cases are those in which you recognize it’s time to leave, you plan your departure, and you take the action required to control your own career,” says master executive coach and author Linda Dominguez of California-based Executive Coaching and Resource Network. One of the first things executives must do is develop and work a strategy that fits both their career and life, says Dominguez. This includes a process of “Who-What-How,” which helps determine your identity in terms of strengths, skills and values and then identifying what worked and what didn’t work in your career.

Dominguez suggests that her clients take a few different assessments.

- A satisfiers/dissatisfiers assessment helps individuals identify cultures, styles and organizations that were a good fit in their careers as well as those who weren’t strong matches.
- A DISC assessment identifies observable behavior to help understand style differences and how to work with them. “These instruments allow you to better understand your own communication style, as well as identify the styles of all those around you.”
- A branding profile enables an individual to understand how he is perceived or described by others, offering feedback from associates and colleagues.
- A 360-degree profile can provide key feedback on such qualities as leadership, adaptability, relationship building, task management, production (results),

What is DISC?

1. How do you **D**irect Problems?
2. How do you **I**nfluence People?
3. How do you **S**erve Risk and Change?
4. How do you **C**omply with Systems and Procedures?

For more information, attend Linda Dominguez’s online FastTrack program: *Converting Interviews to Offers with DISC* on March 15 (http://www.execunet.com/e_network_detail.cfm?fmtid=6a37)

development of others, personal development and communication.

Based on what individuals learn about themselves through these assessments, they can consider their next role and how it fits into their overall career plan. The next step is to outline a plan to accomplish their newly established career goals. “Keep track of your goals and progress, keep doing those things that gain results, stop doing those things that don’t,” says Dominguez.

Self-Discovery Can Lead to Satisfying Results

After spending 10 years as a CIO at two different organizations, Scott Hahn realized that spending more time behind a desk as a CIO was probably not his destiny. “After [working as a CIO for that time], it began to wear on me,” says Hahn. “My health was beginning to fail. I had to reacquaint myself with my wife and kids every weekend. I started thinking, ‘What else is out there?’”

Hahn took a trip to the beach with his family and that’s where he says he started his discovery process to determine his next career move. “My first step was resigning,” says Hahn, who accepted a severance package from his employer and advice from a friend who suggested he talk to a career coach. “I knew I would have to interview again, so I hired a coach to help me go through the discovery and interview processes,” adds Hahn.

Hahn took some personality tests, including DISC (twice), which revealed that he didn’t have the characteristics of a dominant C-level executive. Instead, the coach told Hahn that he had the profile of a promoter and the qualities of a salesman. In the meantime, Hahn says he met with a friend who asked him if he ever

considered becoming a recruiter. While networking, Hahn met with another friend who was a recruiter who posed the same question to him. That evening, he called his coach who reminded him what the DISC assessment had revealed.

In the meantime, “I went on interviews for the same [CIO] position and realized it was more of what I left,” says Hahn. “After those interviews, I got two separate offers, and I declined both. I could see the same stress and the same lifestyle, and I didn’t want it. And I was able to mentally close that door.” Still, Hahn understands how difficult it is to close the door on a previous career and move on.

“It’s difficult for people to step out of their comfort zone. It takes tenacity and a whole lot of courage.” For Hahn, his discovery process began when he resigned in early October 2004 and ended with a recruiting position in January 2005. Hahn, who is now senior managing partner for Jackman Financial Group (where he leads the CIO and mortgage technology practices), says he was very comfortable with his career change decision immediately.

Convincing Recruiters and Employers You’re a Fit

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of a career change is what Hahn endured — one that involves changing industries. Executives in this position tend to find that recruiters and employers are hesitant to hire someone without specific experience within their industry. “Industry changing is always more complicated than moving up a specific career ladder,” says Dominguez. “Recruiters are duty-bound to present to an organization people who most closely match the job search criteria. And if you are a high-tech sales executive

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moving into biotech sales, you might find the task of convincing a recruiter of your adaptability a tough road.”

Montford notes that recruiters aren't usually interested in working with candidates who are making such drastic changes, because they are being paid by client companies to find that exact match. “When you make major career changes, you have to accept that you will have to be the one to make it happen,” says Montford. “The best way is through networking. Build relationships with those in your target industry to demonstrate your valuable transferable skills. Research who is in the know and then get to know them.”

And convincing recruiters that you do, in fact, possess those transferable skills is not impossible. “First, make sure you are truly qualified for the position, know what your perceived shortfall might be, and do whatever you can to mitigate issues (take classes, read),” advises Dominguez. “Work with recruiters to see if they would consider you a wild card entry to the lineup they would normally present.”

Research and preparation helped Jeff Haagenstad convince his new employer to hire him. But that preparation started even before he began making contact with recruiters. Haagenstad says he's always prepared for a job search with what he calls his marketing brochure. “It's a detailed list of companies I've worked for, my successes and failures, processes I've put in place,” he says. Having that information has helped Haagenstad show recruiters that he is a viable candidate for their clients.

Additionally, another piece of information increased Haagenstad's chances when he secured an interview last year with the help of a recruiter. Haagenstad learned from the recruiter that the company he was about to interview with considered itself the leader in its industry.

During the interview process, the CEO of the company told Haagenstad he was the right person for the job, but admitted that his lack of industry experience was a “deal breaker,” recalls Haagenstad, who countered by asking why the top company in the industry would want someone from a lesser organization to lead its efforts. After that, the CEO asked, “How much do you want to work here?” says Haagenstad, who has served as VP of engineering and new product development for Niles Audio Corp. since May 2005.

Industry knowledge can be learned, and Haagenstad had already acquired product development skills in previous positions. “You can't teach overhauling a company,” says Haagenstad. “You pick it up from doing it.” Haagenstad follows the same thinking when hiring his own staff, noting that he recently hired an individual from the automotive industry. “But he has the same philosophy and beliefs. The rest can be taught.”

By showing his new employer that he possessed the skills necessary to succeed at the organization, Haagenstad was able to secure a job offer. Krieger says the key is to understand the common denominators that link your experience to a new job opportunity. For example, you have worked in a high volume environment

selling paper and the new company is also a high volume environment that sells electronic equipment. While the products are different, the companies' environments are the same — they are both high volume.

“Once you get the common denominator understood, you have to articulate it,” says Krieger. “You can't assume the person interviewing you will connect the dots. You have to connect the dots. The onus is on you to explain it.”

Target Each Touchpoint

While networking and research are important skills to use when embarking on a career change, executives must focus on both efforts to ensure their success. Krieger suggests researching by criteria. (Do you want to work for large or small company or a manufacturer or a service organization?) Research only those companies that fit your criteria and network with those specific organizations.

“Choose a few companies and focus on them,” says Krieger. If you know anyone who is affiliated with these companies, it will increase the chances of someone helping you. For example, when researching a company you want to work for, you discover that another organization provides their computer support. If you know people who work for the computer company, they may be able to connect you with appropriate contacts at your dream company. “But you have to always do that research,” says Krieger.

And if you are targeted in your research and networking, you are more likely to succeed in your career change. “The more focused you are in articulating your message, the more help you will get,” adds McCarthy. “The more effective you are as a networker, the greater leverage you bring to your search and the closer you get to hitting your target.” If you're more specific in your criteria, people will know how they can help and be more inclined to follow through.

This is where your ‘board of advisors’ can be helpful. “With your ‘board of advisors,’ measure your potential career options against your skills, and match to business and industry possibilities in your

Signs You Are Ready For A Change:

- You dislike your boss, or your boss dislikes you, and you have been unable to resolve this conflict.
- You have continued clashes with peers, subordinates or customers (internal or external) that you've been unable or unwilling to resolve.
- You no longer enjoy the work you do, and no amount of vacationing will fix it.
- You are in full-blown burnout, suffering the physical symptoms of stress, including headaches, sleeplessness, anxiety or depression.
- Key individuals in your organization lack integrity, and you can no longer justify their actions.
- Your company has hired a new CEO, and he has begun to hire his own leadership team.
- Your boss has been fired, and you are guilty by association.
- You have made a workplace or political blunder, and your rebound plan has not worked.

Source: How To Shine At Work by Linda Dominguez

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Ask the Experts

Disclosing Salary and Reference Information to Recruiters

In this excerpt from a recent ExecuNet online Forum conversation, members ask coaches Meg Montford and Linda Dominguez for recommendations about when to share information with executive recruiters. (Some content has been edited.)

ExecuNet's Forum is the online community area of the site where members can meet and help one another network their way into their next assignment, or share information and experiences. [Access the Forum under "Connections" or go to http://members.execunet.com/e_eunnet.cfm]

Hitek: I recently sent an executive recruiter my résumé. They have come back asking if I am willing to relocate and what my current salary is. They have not indicated that I am a potential fit for any opening they have. Do you think it is advisable to disclose my salary info? If so, should I give a range?

Coach Meg: Having worked as a recruiter many years ago, I understand the rationale behind asking for the candidate's salary — even if the recruiter doesn't have a "hot" lead for him.

Remember that the recruiter is the "broker" between the client company and you. As such, he gets his cut when he can close the deal, not before. He needs to know your salary (not a range), before he can present your qualifications to a client company — and he will use this info only at the opportune time. Sometimes, in order to secure a position requisition, he will use your candidate profile (not your name) to "dangle a carrot" in front of the company prospect.

It's important to always fully disclose with a recruiter. Not only does this mean salary, but any skeletons you may have hiding in the closet. The recruiter will only share with a client company what he believes is necessary to broker the deal. The recruiter builds his reputation with a client company by offering only the candidates who will work out, which, in turn, means only jobs that are a good fit for candidates. If you are going to work with a recruiter, you will need to trust him and not hold back any information.

Hitek: Thanks for the insightful comments. Do you recommend that I provide breakdown of direct salary, variable compensation, performance sharing, etc. or give total?

Coach LindaD: I recommend you give the total compensation number — the recruiter is most likely attempting to prequalify you for positions they have open, and the salary-meter is one quick way for them to do that.

I also recommend you ask, "Is this in connection with the VP job or another opening?" so you understand why the salary question is raised. You can also ask, "Does my last salary meet the requirements of the job?" — and discuss options.

Coach Meg: I'm glad this was helpful. It's okay to share all with the recruiter. Let him choose which figure he will need. While he may be using the information to prequalify you for his open positions, he will also be using it to facilitate the best match possible for his client company and you alike. Again, he earns his commission based on your starting salary, so it behooves him to get as much as possible for you while not compromising his contract with his client company.

*ExecuNet Forum moderator Linda Dominguez also leads FastTrack webinars. An Executive Coach and Motivational Speaker, she is ExecuNet's Regional Director for California and the author of *How to Shine at Work* (McGraw Hill). She can be reached at executive-coaching.com.*

An ExecuNet Forum moderator, Meg Montford is a Master Certified Career Coach™ and Career Management Fellow. Meg facilitates the Greater Kansas City ExecuNet executive networking events. She delivers career-related presentations to various groups. She can be reached at abilitiesenhanced.com.

WilliamExec: I can understand providing them the salary information. However, some recruiters demand references at the first contact step. I am reluctant to give them specifics because 1) I don't know the company or even whether there is interest, and 2) an endless stream of calls from recruiters to references will wear out my goodwill very, very quickly (many of my references are at the CEO/COO/CFO level).

How do you suggest handling the situation without being rejected outright?

Coach LindaD: Providing personal and business references upfront is tricky, you're right. You don't know what the job is; you don't know what the company is; you don't know what type of reference the recruiter is seeking. If you can provide a general reference as to your character, and that will suffice — go for it.

If NOT providing the references upfront is a deal-breaker for the recruiter, then ask what type of specific business references they'd like. For example, leadership? Integrity? Change agent? Ask for as much info on the hiring company as you can get (yeah, I know, it's a big secret — but retained recruiters should be more flexible with the info). If the recruiter is seeking this reference material to evaluate you as a candidate, provide the best of what you have.

It's a good thing to have your references lined up by topic, so you can have one person speak to each of your strengths. Then you aren't calling the same person over and over — that can become sticky, too! ■

Executive Toolbox

Backgrounds Revealed on ZoomInfo

By Marji McClure

Chances are there is information about you all over the Web. Regardless of whether it's personal information or of a professional nature, it is all combined into your own personal profile available from a variety of services now in the business of aggregating people information. ZoomInfo (formerly Eliyon) [zoominfo.com] is one such search engine that crawls the Internet for data about individuals and organizations and presents it in the form of profiles.

ZoomInfo was created by former leaders at CardScan, a business card reading hardware and software and solutions provider. They were accustomed to working with unstructured text (as the location of text on business cards varies) and looked for another source of unstructured text — the Internet — they could help organize. The result was a search engine that can scan websites, press releases and any information available on the Web about people and companies and compiles the data into structured summaries.

According to Brian Payea, ZoomInfo's director of corporate communications, recruiters were a target audience for the service from the beginning. Search professionals apparently use the service throughout the recruiting process: from compiling lists of viable candidates to contacting them to checking backgrounds before a job offer is made.

Getronics North American recruiting operations has used ZoomInfo for more than four years "primarily to both ferret out inactive or passive candidates, and for research purposes to check back-

grounds of both individuals and/or companies we may be targeting," says Dan Kilgore, director of talent acquisition at Getronics. Kilgore said the service provides Getronics with most of the information his company seeks and that he finds the data accurate as well. However, at times, his organization wishes it offered even more data. "One has to keep in mind that [ZoomInfo] is scraping information from the public domain on the Internet, so it is important to be able to verify the sources before you should make actionable decisions," says Kilgore. "Its greatest value can often be in fleshing out background and related data to assist you in getting 'the big picture' that you often need to make informed business decisions." Kilgore stressed however the information is only as accurate as its original source.

This underscores the importance for job-seeking executives to become that original source and be aware of and control what recruiters are uncovering about them on the Web. Begin by conducting a ZoomInfo search of your own name to view what information about you is actually out there. Then, register for free on the site to edit your profile or even create a new one.

If you have a relatively common name, say John Smith or Peter Jones, it is not unusual to find information about another individual interspersed with your own. The software can not always know which Sam Shephard is which. This is why creating your own, clear and complete profile works to your advantage.

While recruiters use the search functions to locate viable talent, the service is useful to executives looking to

connect with particular individuals (perhaps those working at their target companies) who can help advance their careers.

ZoomInfo offers three different user options to assist in a search for individuals or companies: the basic free service, Premium and PowerSearch.

- The free option allows for a basic individual or company search.
- The Premium service includes expanded people and keyword pivot searches.
- PowerSearch adds the ability to enter up to 20 different fields of information (such as title, industry and geography). Executives can create a list of potential networking sources as well as companies to target for possible employment opportunities.

Andrew Grill, general manager, global sales and marketing for Seeker Wireless, says he was intrigued by ZoomInfo when he first learned about the service from a magazine article. "I thought it was interesting that a website would collate and collect information about an individual from freely available sources (and do it quite well)," says Grill, "and individuals could choose to correct, edit and promote their own version of their career history."

And Grill does just that. "I'm keen to protect my own 'personal brand' to ensure what is written on the Web about me is correct," says Grill. "I have also employed online strategies, such as buying as many andrewgrill Web domains as makes sense to protect my brand." ■

Learn more about how to control your online presence with the free ExecuNet Career Guide: Dealing With Your Digital Dirt (<http://members.execunet.com/promo/pdf/DigitalDirt.pdf>)

Career Advisor Continued from page 3

with experience, talent, and focused reasons for making the contact, you will portray maturity and purpose that will leave a lasting impression. You will immediately set yourself apart by resisting the urge to push too hard or too fast. By working from the

mindset that you are doing the recruiting for them, you are sending the message that they may just be the lucky company that can offer you your dream job.

As you begin the process, enlist the support of a business coach, mentor or confidential colleague who will be available to discuss all of the above steps and help

you map out the best strategy aimed at getting you your ideal job. This person should be a trusted, strong supporter of your goal, as well as someone who will offer you objectivity and perspective that will assist in the execution of your plan. Once these things are in place, you'll find it easy to start making things happen in your life. ■

Career Changing

Continued from page 5

geographical area of interest,” says McCarthy. “Ensure your new focus and target areas pass the litmus test of ‘wishful thinking vs. reality.’ Now, use your emissaries and contacts to open doors and provide introductions.”

“Our member networking meetings provide a terrific opportunity to get the names and contacts you need for your target companies,” reminds Lauryn Franzoni, director of ExecuNet’s Center for Executive Careers. “Our members have wide professional networks regardless of whether they are employed or in transition. I have never seen a member leave one of the regional networking meetings without specific leads. The facilitators are really focused on making sure participants identify target companies and that the others in attendance help them out.” [http://www.execunet.com/e_network_results.cfm]

Going Out On Your Own — Or Just Going Out

While all of these tactics may be most helpful if your career change involves remaining a player in corporate America, keep in mind that career change is not limited to that environment. Another option in changing careers is working for yourself. However, this isn’t for everyone. “Becoming an entrepreneur requires a certain drive with a fierce love of risk,” says Montford. “If you don’t have it, you won’t succeed. Test your entrepreneurial quotient through various training

Should You Stay Or Should You Go?

Determining if your next job should be in your current career field or in a different field is a tough challenge. Jean Erickson Walker suggests answering these questions to better understand where your career path should take you.

Remaining in the Same Career Field

1. Is it still viable?
2. What is happening in the global marketplace?
3. Do you enjoy it?
4. Is there opportunity for growth?

Changing Career Fields

1. What are the opportunities?
2. What are your transferables?
3. What will you need to be a credible source?
4. What are the concentric circles around your past career field?

programs or working with a career coach.” Krieger adds that self employment could be an option for individuals who find difficulty in serving as a subordinate to others or those who don’t like to follow rules and procedures or feel these restrictions are counterproductive.

McCarthy suggests asking the following questions to determine if entrepreneurship is the ideal next career move: Do I have the mindset for entrepreneurship? How do my advisors feel about this? McCarthy suggests creating a business plan and asking friends and mentors for their input. Then ask, does it pass the litmus test of wishful thinking vs. reality? Do you have your spouse’s support? Do you have ‘deep pockets’? Can you afford the risk? “Be sure you have a timeline with drop-dead dates and fall-back positions.”

For some, retirement may be the next move. But this may not be as easy a decision as has been for past generations. “Consider your quality of life standards and expectations,” says McCarthy. “Does your earned retirement and portfolio support

your plan? If not, McCarthy says partial retirement — in which an executive could become a consultant — is a possibility. “You have to determine what you want from your life,” says Walker. “And can you get that through retirement? How much of your personal life revolves around your professional life?”

Regardless of which path an executive decides to take, it is important that he or she is willing to invest in his or her future and make things happen, says Walker. “The best advice I’ve ever gotten or given is get yourself a coach,” says Hahn. “They can help you understand yourself.” And once you know yourself, the path to success will become clearer. ■

Expert Resources:

- Linda Dominguez (executive-coaching.com)
- Dennis Krieger (thesource.com/dkrieger)
- Peter McCarthy (careertran.com)
- Meg Montford (abilitiesenhanced.com)
- Jean Erickson Walker (Oipartners.net)

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