

## BECOME A CONSULTANT

**DID YOU KNOW?** 10% of available jobs are secured through the internet? 20% of available jobs are secured through Search (Headhunter) firms? 70% of available jobs are not advertised and are secured through networking and one's own personal efforts.

While seeing if your background fits any of my current search assignments, I encourage you to work with other search firms, network like crazy with your friends and business associates, then review company web sites, evaluate your goals and **maybe consider working for yourself.**



Here is a JOB SEARCHING idea that could open up doors of opportunity for you:

### Do you have these characteristics?

- Age 40 to 70
- Sport a judicious look on your face (when you're not smiling, of course)
- Own an ultra-conservative dress or suit
- Possess the ability to pronounce at least 20 of the latest "buzz words" in your field
- Exhibit expertise in the sales, engineering, manufacturing, personnel, accounting, human relations, technical fields, etc.
- Produced a brochure about your expertise and services (easily done for less than \$100)
- Written a fail-safe resume to back up the brochure
- Stocked up on business cards, appropriate letterhead and envelope (less than \$50)
- Obtained a business license (usually never required)

*Your easiest entry to a job interview—and especially to the unadvertised jobs—is to market yourself as a “consultant.”*

Personal contacts (business associates, former supervisors and co-workers, and friends) are the primary networking source to obtain interviews. Although the number of contacts seems to increase with age, this is not the case for the two largest segments of the middle-age job-seeking population: Those who haven't changed jobs recently and those who are re-entering the job market after an extended absence, early retirement or a reduction-in-force.

The reason consulting is easy to discuss is that there's almost no expense or risk to the "client." According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, up to 36% of a typical business payroll is spent on administration alone. This is not surprising, considering the record keeping, book keeping, cash flow management, payroll taxes, paid holidays, paid vacations, paid sick leave, paid insurance, and paid everything else.

As an "independent contractor" rather than employee, there's no concern about you running to the EEOC or state agency with an age, medical condition, physical handicap, or sex discrimination complaint. No concern with group medical, worker's compensation, or disability claims either. You are issued a "1099" (an Internal Revenue Service form) at the end of the year and pay your own taxes.

**Telephone solicitation is the best way to obtain an appointment.** To gather names of companies and individuals, use Google or a business directory (*Rich's Business Directory*, (415) 964-4343, is excellent), the public library business section, Journals in the field of your expertise, past business connections and an appointment calendar.

The "CONSULTANT" approach **immediately postures you to talk to the hiring authority** without alienating the personnel department or being turned back by the receptionist, who says "we are not hiring now." It is an accepted practice for consultants to discuss "projects" directly with those responsible for the projects. Even the personnel field has its cadre of management development, training, human factors, wage and salary, recruiting, sourcing, out placements, insurance, pension, employee benefits, safety, communications, labor relations, and other consultants.

The usual Telephobia (fear of calling) will subside after a few calls. It's easy to sound knowledgeable when you don't understand the situation. As a consultant and *senior member* of the human race, you may have a tendency to be overbearing, so be careful not to oversell.

A competent consultant/advisor listens well, probes, asks questions, uses the same vocabulary as the client, and avoids "shooting from the lip."

The appointment is **an end in itself**. The call is the means. It's usually about five minutes in length. Any longer reduces the chances of a personal meeting. You're interviewing, not arranging. If the conversation lingers, more investigation is needed for an interview. This is how a voice of experience sounds:

**Receptionist:** Good morning, Company XYZ.

**You:** Hi, Dick Williams here. What's the name of your Director of Engineering?

**Receptionist:** I'm not sure, I'll put you through to Engineering.

**Secretary:** Engineering, may I help you?

**You:** Hi, may I speak with the Engineering Manager? What is his name?

**Secretary:** What is this regarding?

**You:** I want to speak with the Manager about a technical matter. What is his name?

**Secretary:** His name is John Smith, and he's in a meeting.

**You:** Fine, when will Mr. Smith's meeting be over? I will call him back.

You'll be surprised how easy it is to get names by simply asking for them. Sometimes the receptionist is told never to give out names. If that happens, ask for the sales department. Sales/customer service people are generally people oriented and want to help. They almost always provide names when you ask for them.

Talk with decision makers. Talk with the president if the company is smaller. The sales, engineering, manufacturing or general manager, the chief financial officer or any manager who can use your consulting services is a prospect. All managers have problems and are looking for people and methods to solve those problems. It could be a temporary problem and your call is timely.

## Temporary assignments can lead to permanent assignments.

When I'm searching for new clients and job orders, I'm most comfortable talking with the sales manager, because I was one. They quickly tell me if the company uses searches or who the engineering manager is, etc. I am always up-front and as direct as possible. I don't use ploys or trick questions. As a "headhunter," I am a consultant selling my services in the search field. I am selling the idea that I can find the "right person" for their organization.

While your call can start differently and take an infinite number of turns, you are controlling the dialogue. It should be a dialogue, not two monologues. Listen actively, but don't give away your valuable advice when clients are willing to pay for it. How much is "too much"? Anything beyond "just enough." You're giving away the sample, not selling the product.

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*Abraham Lincoln said it, and every lawyer knows it:  
"Your time and advice are your stock in trade."  
Fee or free — which will it be?*

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You will probably need to leave messages, using voice mail. Simply identify yourself, your company, your position (e.g. communication consultant), leave your telephone number, email address and best time to reach you. Call the manager again in a day or so, if he/she doesn't return your call. Be persistent. Don't assume they won't talk with you. All you want from him/her is an appointment to meet face to face. At that meeting, you will be selling your services, not over the telephone.

When the manager calls back, always be courteous but too busy to talk. Ask if you can return the call in a "few minutes." This makes you appear in demand. It then enables you to organize your thoughts, review notes, drink a coffee (please) and relax. Then by initiating the call, your control position is increased.

Note the emphasis in the **Consultant Phone Call** is helping someone else. We're utilizing one of the most basic success principles ever discovered: **You get what you want, if you give others what they want!**

The Consultant Phone Call considers the natural insecurity of anyone who depends upon another for emotional and financial support. **There's a big difference between advising and assisting.** It also utilizes another success principle that makes it so dramatically effective:

**Don't mention that you are looking for a job.**

The last thing you want to say to a manager who is in trouble, whether real or imagined, is that you intend to replace him/her. In fact, you want to make him/her feel that you will be like George Burns in Oh, God!—an invisible miracle worker. The fact is, you probably will be!

As you go down the list of clients, making notes on your appointment calendar, you will notice that you've become more adept at finessing around the receptionist and secretary. Be completely honest and up-front. Your experience can be useful to them. They need your problem-solving abilities. Mis-representing yourself destroys your self-respect and is conveyed in your delivery.

**"Mid-life is not end-life... many know it's often Begin-life."** Start out believing in yourself, forgetting about your age, the time of day, the day of the week, the area code, the last call, the errand to run or any other

excuse to procrastinate. **The world awaits the voice of experience. That's you!** I hope that you're beginning to see that the "hidden job" market isn't hidden at all. It's the applicants who are hiding. It should be called the "**obvious job market.**"

You can see the uselessness of chasing help-wanted advertisements for yourself. By the time an employer is paying for responses from a help-wanted ad, you're just part of an amorphous mass at the wide end of a funnel. That's the phenomenon you see on the news—500 workers outside some assembly plant applying for one job. It makes interesting news, but that's not how the game is played.

Placement services and Search firms wouldn't stay in business if they just canvassed internet ads or waited for employers to call them. We know the secret, and now you do also. Penetrate before the job is officially available. That's relying on human nature. A very reliable thing.

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## Other Job Hunting Ideas

### "HELP AVAILABLE" ADVERTISING INTERNET, NETWORKING, NEWSPAPERS

The Consultant Phone Call is a proven technique; one other deserves honorable mention. It is the advertising campaign to augment your telephone solicitation campaign. A "**help-available**" internet, Google, classified advertisement in a metropolitan newspaper, trade journals and related periodicals is the reciprocal of a "help-wanted" ad, and might read like this:

#### ENGINEERING EXECUTIVE

Proven ability. Presently vice president of diversified manufacturing company. Seeking executive position in:

- Economic Feasibility
- Planning, Mergers, Acquisitions
- Patent Review, Licensing
- Top Corporate Management

Box XXX, San Jose Mercury

*or*

#### DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Currently employed, seeking position in hi-tech electronics field.

Experienced in component selling, merchandising, distributing, planning and advertising. Participated in corporate acquisitions and mergers. Phone (415) 426-6707 or write Box 1234, San Jose Mercury.

Since your identity isn't disclosed, it makes no difference whether you are currently employed. If you're looking for consulting assignments, display ads are also a possibility. They are more expensive, but enable you to be more creative and perhaps elicit more responses.

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## Classified Ads

Internet and Google are required week-end reading for job seekers and employment professionals, even if they are not hiring. Placement counselors, executive recruiters and others in the hiring process will also be in the audience. You may be surprised how well and how inexpensively your background can be marketed either as a prospective employee or consultant. Be ready with a fail-safe resume for each and a well-drafted cover letter. Some ideas when answering ads:

- Make your resume sharp, concise and short.
  - Show accomplishments. Make it look like a movie ad in the newspapers. You only have a few seconds to impress someone.
  - Use bullet headlines.
  - Don't be discouraged if you don't receive prompt response from an ad. Companies may have received several hundred ads, and probably a clerk has to sort them into "yes" or "no" piles.
  - Don't get emotionally involved in answering ads. Assume you won't get a call-back. Then you won't be disappointed when you do not hear back. Don't rely on want ads for your main job search effort.
  - Don't assume companies aren't hiring just because they aren't advertising or have downsized. Remember the "hidden jobs," most jobs are not advertised.
  - Design a snappy cover letter for each ad. You need e-mail and computer to make the search easier.
  - Customize your resume to meet the ad. Eliminate information that is not pertinent to the job description. Don't bother with minor data. Give them your best accomplishments.
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## Positive Attitude, The Key To Success

- Keep positive, it is not the end of the world. The sky is not falling.
  - Spend time with positive people. Avoid negative people, even relatives trying to bring you down.
  - Stop watching negative news on TV and reading about the economy in newspapers. All that matters is your own space and what you can do about it. You cannot solve problems in Europe or Africa, and the fact that 50,000 workers lost their jobs last month, does not mean there is not opportunity for you.
  - Think only of yourself and your family.
  - Listen to positive messages whenever possible.
  - The only things that matter are the space you occupy and what you can do for yourself. Destiny is in your hands, not the Government's.
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## Recommended Publications and Audio Tapes

*Knock 'Em Dead books, by Martin Yates, cover letters and resume writing*

*How to Turn an Interview Into a Job, by Jeffery Allen*

*How to Win Friends and Influence People, by Dale Carnegie*

*Looking Out for Number One, by Robert Ringer*

*Think and Grow Rich, by Napoleon Hill*

*You Can Negotiate Anything, by Herb Cohen*

Amazon and some book stores have an excellent selection of books and audio tapes. Nightingale Conant has the largest selection of business and motivating audio tapes. Call and order their catalog (800) 525-9000. I recommend the following speakers from their list: • Anthony Robbins • Brian Tracy • Dennis Waitley • Dr. Deepak Chopra • George Walther • Roger Dawson • Tom Hopkins • Wayne Dyer • Zig Ziglar

**Call me if any of these ideas work for you.** Meanwhile, if I have any searches that require your skills and talents, I will call you.

*"I won't send you anyone I wouldn't hire myself."*

**Dick Williams** - Founded in 1988 by Dick Williams - semiconductor executive bringing firsthand experience to the search process - is well versed in the areas of capital equipment, instrumentation, materials and chemicals. As a president, sales and marketing vice-president and an operations director and one-time job seeker, Dick understands recruitment from the candidate's point of view.



(925) 925 980-4991 | 7901 Stoneridge Drive, Suite 320 Pleasanton, CA 94588  
[www.dwasearch.com](http://www.dwasearch.com) | [dick@dwasearch.com](mailto:dick@dwasearch.com)

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