

(**SLIDE** – Jim McCarty)

Hi. My name is Jim McCarty. It's great being here at the Region 4 conference to share some job-related thoughts with you. (**SLIDE** – Finding Opportunities).

## **FINDING OPPORTUNITIES**

This morning, I want to share with you some of what we have learned at WorkQuest™ about uncovering job opportunities, and finding work. Or sometimes even creating **new** job opportunities.

But first, some housekeeping. I want you to know that I am working from a prepared script. It's not that I can't “**wing it**”. I could talk for **hours**. But I only have 15 minutes. Scripting this talk is a way of keeping me on track, and preserving the time set-aside for our other speakers.

And, because I am a kind and **caring** person, I'm making this session **easy** for you. My script and slides are on the WorkQuest™ website. You don't even have to take **notes** . . . Just suffer through my dialog.

Also on our website, is a handout from an earlier presentation I shared with our WorkQuest™ group in Pittsburgh. It is called “Networking . . . and your ROI” (or Return on Investment). Many of the details supporting this **abbreviated** presentation are found in that document. I offer it to you as a sharing as well.

But right now, we're burning daylight. So, **Let's Roll!**

We all know that the job market has **changed** in recent years. There are fewer jobs out there (or fewer jobs that we are aware of), and the competition for each job seems to grow every day.

So how do we go about finding that **perfect**, but **elusive**, job?

Mary Ann talked a bit about how to prepare materials to effectively market yourself. Later, Dianna and John will talk about preserving your sanity in this whole job search mess, and improving the skills you need to be most effective in your quest. At the end of the hour, it will all come together.

So, where do we find job **opportunities**? . (**SLIDE** – Job List).

For most of us, this is where we go to find jobs.

We have our favorite web sites. We read the Sunday Want Ads. We talk to recruiters and temp agencies; we go to job fairs and pull up company websites looking for work. Sometimes we're successful. Most often we are not. But we keep trying.

I know one person who found a super telecommuting job, for a national company, posted on a Super Market bulletin board. Go figure. Was that a fluke? Maybe. Maybe not. The whole point is that you have to try just about everything when searching for work. You have to do a **lot of mining** to find that "**golden**" job.

How many of you are in a networking group? How about a show of hands.

(side comment) ((To some this may be repetitive, but please bear with me)).

I would encourage all of you to join a networking group, or two, and begin some formal networking. Why? (**SLIDE** – Percentages).

That's where you will find jobs no one else knows about.

The consensus is pretty strong that job opportunities pretty much follow this profile.

So, if the Internet, newspapers, recruiters, job fairs, etc. represent 20 to 25% of the job potentials, and networking represents **75 to 80%**, don't you think networking deserves some serious **attention**? Duh!

Let's dig a little bit deeper into networking. (**SLIDE** – What is networking)?

## **WHAT IS NETWORKING?**

Networking is an organized approach to developing contacts with individuals who can refer you to the person who can hire you.

Basically, this means introducing yourself to others, and asking for their help in your job search. That help may include people they know at certain companies, or the names of individuals who may refer you to others in your job search.

In a nutshell, networking is the art of getting referrals, with the objective being a referral to the person who can hire you. Each referral should lead you a little closer to that key person. It's kind of like peeling the layers of an onion, until you reach the core.

Networking can start anywhere; with friends, family, parishioners, classmates, peers, other parents at school events, etc. Really every contact you make is a networking opportunity. Once you are involved in networking, you will be surprised where contacts come from. And, how easy they are to pursue. Networking requires a lot of effort. But if build a solid network, and maintain it, you will likely never be out of work.

(**SLIDE** – Getting Ready for Networking)

## **GETTING READY FOR NETWORKING**

Before you start networking, you need to get ready.

The better prepared you are for networking the greater will be your success.

Here are some helpful tips. First of all:

- Get organized.
- Make a list of Target Companies you want to contact (or infiltrate).
- Make a list of contacts you already have. People who can help you.
- Develop a game plan, or a plan to market yourself. (If you don't market yourself, who will?).
- Create good marketing materials: An attractive business card, a one-page profile, a resume, sample cover letters, and a portfolio.
- Develop a succinct 30-second spiel (or drill) that says who you are, what you do, and states your major accomplishments. This will get you more introductions and referrals than you can imagine. Particularly in impromptu situations.
- Prepare a two-minute spiel (or drill) as well, for people who say, “Tell me more?” (**SLIDE** – Getting ...Interview).

## **GETTING THE NETWORKING INTERVIEW**

Follow up leads (or referrals) in a timely manner.

The objective is to get a 20 to 30 minute interview with the person you were referred to. The purpose of the interview is to learn more about their company, and get referrals to other individuals, in their company or elsewhere. Each referral should lead you closer to a person who can hire you. (**SLIDE** – Conducting the Interview).

## **CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW**

The networking interview is **NOT** a job interview. It is an information gathering session. You want to find out what needs the company has that you may be able to fulfill, and who in that company has the authority to hire you or recommend that you be hired.

Build the confidence of the person you are talking to, so that he/she will recommend or refer you to others. No one is going to risk their reputation by referring someone they do not know, or do not have confidence in. No one wants to look bad in the eyes of others. Particularly their **bosses**.

For the networking interview, you might want to:

- Do some research about that company before you call for an interview.
- Prepare a list of intelligent questions you want to ask.
- Make a list of points you want to cover in the networking interview ... so you don't forget anything.
- Dress appropriately ... like you were on a job interview.
- Don't overstay our visit. If you asked for 20 minutes, don't stay longer unless invited to do so.
- Remember, this is a confidence building, fact-finding session.
- Thank the person, and ask how you can help them. Networking is a two-way street. (**SLIDE** – Follow-up is Critical).

### **FOLLOW-UP IS CRITICAL**

After your networking interview, send a personal, hand-written thank you note. At worst, send a typed letter snail mail, unless you've agreed to communicate by way of e-mail.

Keep good records. The better your records, the better you can manage your network, analyze the results of your efforts, and improve the effectiveness of your networking activities. (**SLIDE** – Timing is everything).

### **TIMING IS EVERYTHING**

If your networking **objective** is to get in front of the person who can **hire** you, then it follows that the **sooner** you can accomplish that, the sooner you might anticipate a job **offer**. (**SLIDE** – Timing w/ Hiring Life Cycle)

It also follows that the sooner you make contact during the **Hiring Life Cycle**, the less competition you are likely to encounter. Now, **that's** a pretty interesting thought. (**SLIDE** – Hiring Life Cycle).

### (HIRING LIFE CYCLE)

There is a logical progression in the hiring process. It starts with determining the need to hire someone, and concludes with actually hiring a candidate. There are several steps along the way. But, the sooner you make contact with the person who can hire you the greater are your chances of being considered, and hired. (**SLIDE** - #1)

The first step in the Hiring Life Cycle is:

1. Determine the need. At this point, there is little or no competition. If a company is creating this position because they recognize the contribution **you** can make, you have a definite inside track. (**SLIDE** - #2).
2. Develop job specifications. Wouldn't it be nice if they tailored the job specs to **your** specific skill set and accomplishments? (**SLIDE** - #3)
3. Develop candidate requirements: Wouldn't it be nice if the background they request were a perfect match with **your** background? (**SLIDE** - #4)
4. Look for candidates internally: There may be a few, and they may have an inside track, but there is still very little competition for **you**. (**SLIDE** - #5)
5. Review prior candidates: Corporate files may turn up others who have sent resumes or contacted the company. That creates a little more competition for you, but it may not be severe. (**SLIDE** - #6)

6. Advertise the position: Now the competition really begins. Local ads can produce hundreds of responses. Internet ads, thousands. **Your** odds just became **much** worse. (**SLIDE** - #7)
7. Select potential candidates: This begins the process of selecting a few candidates to interview from the many candidates available. Here your cover letter and resume must do the selling for you. There is no face-to-face opportunity to promote **yourself**. (**SLIDE** - #8)
8. Interview candidates: Congratulations on making it this far. But you are one of ... how many? (**SLIDE** - #9)
9. Negotiate the deal: Now, you have less ability than ever to negotiate the terms of employment **you** desire. Because of the competition, it's more on the company's terms than yours. (**SLIDE** - #10)
10. Hire the candidate selected: Congratulations! It was quite a battle, wasn't it? So much competition to fight off ...

The whole point here is that the earlier you make contact during the Hiring Life Cycle the less competition you encounter, and the greater chance you have for success.

There is a philosophy and a psychology associated with networking that is frequently ignored. Today, I would like to call your attention to it. (**SLIDE** – The "X" Factor).

It is the "X" factor.

With a show of hands, how many of you are in sales? Actually, we are all in sales.

What are we selling? Our Skill set, and our persona.

Who do we sell to? Everyone we meet (our persona) and with networking contacts our skill set (as well).

What is the sale we ultimately want to make? You've got it. Getting a job offer. (**SLIDE** – It's all in Sales).

## **IT'S ALL IN SALES**

We are all sales persons when it comes to landing a job. We are selling ourselves **into** the job opportunity.

We could do a whole lot worse than to identify, and **follow** some of the techniques that make sales people successful. Such as:

- Be prepared.
- Know your product (or your skill set) well.
- Keep up with the latest trends, and news.
- Prepare a game plan (a marketing plan), and stick with it.
- Create good promotional materials, and use them well.
- Exercise good time management.
- Ask intelligent, probing questions.
- Maintain your focus.
- Keep good records. (And keep your Contact List and Prospect List current).
- Overcome call reluctance. Both phone calls and personal, cold calls.
- **Make calls** to prospects daily. The law of averages will take care of you.  
Prospecting is a numbers game. The more calls you make the more likely you are to succeed.
- Welcome rejection. Each turn down brings you one step closer to acceptance.
- Demonstrate your willingness to help.
- Always ask for referrals.
- Don't promise anything you cannot deliver. Deliver everything you promise.
- Follow-up on every contact you have. (**SLIDE** – One Final Thought)

## ONE FINAL THOUGHT

I do have one final thought for you this morning.

If you remember nothing else from this presentation, I hope you will remember **this**.  
(**SLIDE** – Looking for work is a full time job).

Looking for work is a **full time job**.

If you are spending less than 40 hours a week actively looking for work, you are **short-changing your employer** ... who, of **course**, is **YOU**. (**SLIDE** – Jim McCarty).

Thanks **a bunch** for spending this time with me. I hope it proves to be **profitable** for **you**.

And, I wish **all of you** the **best of luck** in your own personal, **Work Quest**. (**SLIDE** - WorkQuest™ Website).

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