

AUTHORITY

Career Concepts, Inc., experts in Career Management, Human Resource Consulting, Executive Coaching, Business Mentoring. . . . www.careerconceptsinc.net

Organizational and Individual Consulting

Volume 1, Issue 3

www.careerconceptsinc.net

January 2002

Is It Time for Your Yearly Human Resources Audit?

In this issue we talk about change and preparedness. Just how much do we assume is right just because it has not surfaced as an issue? Take the mailroom anthrax issue that arose last year. Many clients have incorporated new procedures and safety guidelines after taking a closer look at the process, not just because of the anthrax scare. What else lurks? We highly recommend a yearly Human Resources Audit. The audit should help ensure that your organization is complying with your human resource policies and state and federal legal requirements. The audit should cover examination of your employment process, affirmative action (if applicable), staffing and selection, wage and hour issues, attendance and punctuality policy administration, FMLA, performance management and disciplinary policies, telephone monitoring requirements, sexual harassment statement, your employee handbook, etc. It is also a good time to take stock of the needs of your business partners and to find out how they think the HR team is performing. Remember sometimes no news is bad news. Communications and being proactive is key to progress and success. Incidentally, if you need help with your audit our team of experts is here to assist.

A Sourcing Reminder

A great and FREE source of very capable and qualified applicants is our database of outplacement candidates. Our role in our candidates' search for employment is many-fold. While we help them with the necessities of the process, like a resume, job search tools, cover letters, interview and negotiation techniques, etc., we also take an active role in finding them job leads. One of *our* greatest sources is our customer. We recently received a desperate call from a customer looking to fill an executive assistant position. Within an hour we coordinated the flow of 5 resumes to meet the need and posted the position with a client currently going through reorganization. As of this writing, interviews are in progress. It's great when a plan comes together. Refer to our website at www.careerconceptsinc.net for a current listing of some of our most recent candidates available. You can also call us for leads from our total database.

Who's New At Career Concepts, Inc.?

Career Concepts, Inc. is very pleased to welcome Marybeth Fedyna to our team. "When you are able to attract talent like Marybeth Fedyna to your team you know that you are doing everything right as an organization," cheers Joe Dougherty, EVP. A little about Marybeth...an adult educator, an organizational effectiveness specialist, a trainer, an executive coach, a sales and sales management professional, who has over 20 years of experience. Marybeth recently left Merck & Co. to join Career Concepts. In her role at Merck, Marybeth was one of the top Osteoporosis Sales Specialists, known not only for her sales results but also for the education and training she provided and the relationships she built. "That's probably what attracted us most to Marybeth," claims Russ Dunn, President and Founder of Career Concepts. "She's an athlete. She can help us further develop our business, share her extensive knowledge both internally and externally and fortify our delivery system." Marybeth developed and delivered training programs to over 800 customers and taught Organizational Psychology at Gwynedd Mercy College, Chestnut Hill College and Philadelphia University. Her areas of expertise are leadership, motivation, team building, conflict management, communications, sales and sales management training. She has also completed considerable personal and organizational assessment work. At Career Concepts, Marybeth assumes the role of Vice President of Client Services and Business Development. She will continue to grow our very successful Training and Development and Organizational Development practice.



7 local offices
in the PA, NJ,
DE and MD
area, and...

...over 250
partner locations
around the
world...

Was 2001 a Year or What? *by Sharon Imperiale*

A news reporter from *The Philadelphia Inquirer* recently asked us what impact September 11, 2001 had on our business. How much did it increase our group of outplacement clients? When you look at 2001 in retrospect certainly 9-11 was the most traumatic event that American citizens and businesses had to face. Not only was it tragic but 9-11 surfaced all kinds of other workplace issues such as recovery plans, safety, security, employee mental health, etc. Top that with an economy that began a rapid descent early in the year with commensurate layoffs, a volatile stock market, 401(k) statements better not opened and the lowest prime rate we have seen in decades. Unemployment increased from 4.2% in January 2001 to 5.8% in December 2001. The fact of the matter is that 9-11 complicated an already shifting economy. With all that said, what's the reality for the clients we are helping transition? Great!

Folks are finding jobs and many have the luxury of choice. One marketing and sales executive we recently coached left the job in November and wanted employment by January. Armed with a strong resume, excellent references, and an exhaustive marketing plan he is currently challenged with four very strong, viable offers! Another chose between two. Once again, we commit that the strength of the search strategy is proportionate to the results.

For the record, I thought that I had much more profound information to share with the reporter other than "people were blind-sided." I actually know that our clients keep their finger on the pulse and are very astute about the employment environment. Thanks, I now feel better!

New Thoughts for a New Year *by Sharon Imperiale*

A career change can take place in your present organization or with another. But often one question troubles us: is it too late to change careers? Absolutely NOT, but how, what and where do I start? While anything is possible, changing careers, especially at that mid-point in your life can present a challenge. And this is the very first question you must answer: are you up to the challenge? It's fairly easy to walk the path of least resistance but the "road less traveled by" has some sharp turns. Let's consider the answer to be affirmative.

Sharpen your pencil because you need a dynamic resume that will catch attention. The resume should clearly demonstrate your experience and your "transferable skills," those that do not know industry boundaries. Do I have those, you ask. As a job seeker you must be able to identify your core skills, how transferable your skills are to other careers, the value of your skills in the current market and what new skills you need to tackle in the future. We can further break skills into three categories: personal, functional and technical. Personal skills are our traits, the characteristics we bring to different jobs and careers, e.g., detail-oriented, innovative, assertive. Functional skills describe our aptitudes and are transferable to other jobs, e.g., attention to detail, team-building, troubleshooting. Finally, technical skills relate to specific knowledge and may be less transferable, e.g., administering benefits, skilled in manufacturing design. The ability to articulate your skills and how they transfer to the job at hand is critical to landing that new position in a new industry.

Next, have both barrels loaded with strong, qualitative and quantitative accomplishments. Employers want to know what you can do for the organization. Your past record of success is a good indicator of your future ability to make a difference with the prospective employer. Ask yourself some strategic questions: what challenges did I resolve in the past? How did I resolve them and what was the result of my actions? What change efforts did I lead? What happened as a result of my leadership? How did I add value to my team, my customer, and my company? Use strong action verbs such as implemented, lead, managed, enhanced, increased, exceeded, etc. Simply put, because of my doing X, the result was X.

The rule of sales is to know thy competition. The rule of job search is to know thy potential employer. Research the company, read recent press releases, look at their financial statements and stock history. Almost everyone has a web site today. Look at the mission statement, products, service philosophy, customer lists, career center, diversity statement, etc. Once armed with this data, describe your fit. Remember, you are competing on a different level when you are trying to change careers. The hiring manager needs to be convinced he/she should take the risk and hire someone that doesn't match exactly. Sell your experience, your knowledge, your wisdom and agility. You may be competing with applicants that are younger, have direct experience and do not make as much money as you do so make the business case and market your ROI. Don't forget some of the basics: keep or get into shape, dress in an updated yet classic wardrobe and don't make reference to the age or tenure of others folks applying for the job—it is a non-issue!

Training Video Review Corner

The Fire Starter Collection

David Whyte is a poet and a compelling speaker. The messages in these videos are deep, complex and almost spiritual. While at first glance, the viewer may be tentative and even skeptical the messages linger long after the television goes blank. In *Finding the Courage to Act*, Whyte speaks to us of courage and discipline. Using the epic, Beowulf, he helps us explore our fears, the fears that prohibit us from confronting our own monsters. He leaves us with powerful thoughts and questions. "Courage is asking ourselves: When did I last die on the shore? When will I dive to the bottom, assuring that I have the conversations I need to, the conversations that will make a difference in the way we do things, the way we have fun, in the way we communicate, in the way people here value their job and working with me?" This video is only for those who truly want introspection and emotional growth. In our training programs we use this video when the participants are ready! Ponder this, "It is not the thing you fear, but the mother of the thing you fear."

In *Bringing Your Whole Self to Work*, Whyte challenges us to think about the amount of time we spend in work as opposed to the time we spend in our natural world. How much of ourselves do we bring to the work place? What would happen if we brought our whole selves? What would be possible? He dares us "to make one's work a good servant to what we want for ourselves and those close to us." He cites a Robert Frost passage, "Yield who will to their separation. My object in living is to unite my avocation with my vocation." Vocation he explains means to have a voice. How satisfying to my life's work is it to have a say, a voice in the organization. It can be had. You must bring your whole self to work.

Career Concepts, Inc.

140 W. Germantown Pike, Ste. 150
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462-1434
610-941-4455

Russ Dunn, President/Partner
Joseph Dougherty, EVP/Partner
Sharon Imperiale, SVP/Partner
www.careerconceptsinc.net