

AUTHORITY

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

Volume 2, Issue 2

www.careerconceptsinc.net

March 2002

Compensation Sometimes Comes in Very Special Ways

Sharon Imperiale

Because of what we do for a living, i.e., help people personally develop, we are often called upon to assist. We often pitch in before we are asked and sometimes people question why. I recently saw the movie *Pay It Forward*, where a young boy is given a class assignment to create an opportunity that could conceivably change the world. He proposes that each time you do something for someone, that instead of accepting a payback, you "pay it forward." Imagine a world where each of us paid back a favor by doing a favor for someone else.

We recently had the pleasure of helping one of our most special clients, a nursing home for retired Sisters, orchestrate a mailing to over 14,000 homes. That's a lot of labels, and a labor of love! My eight-year-old daughter declares this as the first job on her resume. Here is what Sister had to say, "...The sisters we serve are very holy people. You can rest assured they will remember you in their prayers. Believe me when I say look for a miracle in your life. The Sisters pray and God listens to these holy women who suffer without complaint each and every day. They truly communicate with their God in a very special way." We will also share in one year of Masses celebrated in their chapel.

I do not know how we will ever "pay this one forward."

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

Your College Graduate's First Job

Sharon Imperiale

The National Association of Colleges and Employer's (NACE) 2002 Salary Survey reports that one-third of this year's 1.2 million college graduates could find themselves without employment for up to 6 months longer than in past years. College hiring is down about 20% over last year. Camille Luckenbaugh, NACE, says, "Economic recovery may be imminent but many employers tell us they are not convinced. They plan to wait and see if the economy turns the corner before recruiting new graduates or increasing salary offers to them." The survey reports good news for accounting graduates as they are realizing a 3.7% increase in salary with the average starting salary of \$40,174. Except for Civil Engineering, which is seeing a slight increase, all other disciplines are slightly declining.

In response to this state of affairs, Career Concepts is offering a **free career search seminar** for recent or soon-to-be graduates on **March 30, 2002** at our Plymouth Meeting location. We will discuss resumes, networking and search strategies, interviewing and most importantly of all, differentiating yourself from the competition. If you know of someone who needs help, please contact Sharon Imperiale at 610-941-4455 or via email at simperiale@cconcepts.org.

Bottom line, there are fewer jobs and more applicants as many of the recent unemployed compete for those same openings. It is critical that our college graduates are able to set themselves apart. Demonstrating their experience, knowledge of the company or industry to which they are applying, and return on investment for the employer will make them stand out.

In another survey by NACE, employers ranked the top candidate qualities. They are: communication skills, honesty and integrity, teamwork, interpersonal skills, and motivation and initiative. We will practice interviewing around these and other attributes.

Again, we are hosting this seminar to give our clients' children a competitive edge. Our own children are competing in this same environment, so we know how tough it is...

Is It Really So Simple? ♥

Sharon Imperiale

Southwest Airlines is the only airline that did not experience staff reductions after the September 11, 2001 tragedy. In fact, they announced on February 19, 2002 that they are hiring an additional 4,000 workers this year. Merrill Lynch analyst Michael Linenberg said, "Southwest's ability to avoid layoffs last fall has probably raised employee loyalty and improved productivity, already considered the strongest among major carriers." (*CNN Money* 2/19/2002). In times of trouble, the airline was able to sustain momentum, and make money when others were failing. Aside from the fact that they operate at the lowest costs in the industry, Southwest has something that other corporations only talk about: unparalleled employee loyalty.

As part of our training curriculum that we offer to our 400+ corporate clients, we use a video program called, "It's So Simple," to facilitate several of our learning programs. It guides the audience through the culture of Southwest Airlines. The culture is founded on love of work not fear. Fear of mistakes, getting caught and not being who the organization thinks you should be, are not things you will hear in the hallways of Southwest. From this emerges a culture of concern, compassion, community and commitment. Employees are respected and, in turn, they respect each other, which makes them happy and so the customer is the winner.

Some other "simple" but dynamic operating principles: "hire for talent and train for success, allow your employees to be themselves, make them accountable for solutions not rules, and create an atmosphere with a focus on ownership, trust, authenticity and success." Right after the September 11, 2001 crisis, Colleen Barrett, President and COO, issued a statement addressing the airline's commitment to safety, regardless of cost. She ended with, "...and on a more personal note, my son and grandson are the most precious things in my life, and I wouldn't hesitate for a second to place either one of them on a Southwest Airline flight." Now, that's from the heart.

If you think that it is impossible for your organization to be like Southwest Airlines, ask yourself this one "simple" question, "So what makes it possible for Southwest and not us?"

The Challenge of Discipline

Sharon Imperiale

"There are no great men. Just great challenges which ordinary men, out of necessity, are forced by circumstances to meet." Admiral William F. "Bull" Halsey
"I go to work each day happy, ready to contribute whatever it takes, skip lunch, stay late, help my peers, make money for the company and suddenly, by circumstance, have no place to go this morning. I had to tell my wife that I lost my job. My children asked if I was going to have to work in a store like a friend's dad. I am cursing myself for not finishing my MBA and not keeping up on ALL the current technology. I have never felt old a day in my life and now I do not recognize the man in the mirror. I dug out my non-competite document that my employer had me sign a few years ago. Does this still apply? Does this mean I am restricted from working? I wonder if I can collect unemployment if I get a severance payment? I need to sign a release, but a release from what? What should I stop doing, what should I start doing?"

This is an actual conversation that took place only weeks ago. The fact is, that although this is a very real and specific conversation, it could have been told by anyone of the many transitioning employees with whom we are working. We share in the challenge: to reach deep and hold steady to your core values. The core values that will shorten the trek are discipline, commitment, perseverance, persistence, self-motivation and confidence. In Harris Kern's book, *Discipline: Six Steps to Unleashing Your Hidden Potential*, he talks about establishing goals and adhering to them, setting priorities that are flexible, avoiding complacency and remaining focused despite the circumstances. Finding a new beginning in your career takes discipline. One of Kern's favorite motivational quotes is, "No pain, no gain." Losing your job is painful, finding the new beginning is gainful. The person quoted above has been on an average of two networking meetings and one interview a week. He is about to receive his first offer, but may not take it because he expects others. He will not have to work in a store unless he wants to. It is stories like this where we believe that we separate ourselves from our competition. We connect with the candidate in very difficult situations and concentrate on results.

What Is Your Company Passionate About?

Patreece Thompson, MD

In the March 2002 issue of *Harvard Management Update*, one of the articles addresses two books that discuss strategies for companies that endure. James C. Collins, in his most recent book, *Good to*

Great suggests that creating an enduring company requires maintaining core values while encouraging continual change and growth. He says a company must answer three questions:

1. *What is your company truly passionate about (what are your core values)?*
2. *What can you be the best in the world at making or providing?*
3. *What drives your economic engine?*

The first question can be easily answered at Career Concepts, Inc. We are passionate about helping people through a most difficult period in their lives, job loss, and doing it in such a way that has meaningful impact. The successes come through when even in a tight market, we can support our candidates and provide strategies that enable them to find positions in which to use their skills optimally, and potentially increase their salary. Our passion is conveyed in the optimism that infects everyone on the staff.

One of our career transition candidates "Walt" during one of our weekly workshops made a statement that is both complimentary and a testimony to the work done at Career Concepts. He said, "I don't know if everyone is taught to do this, or the staff have gone through career changes themselves, but everybody is so positive and optimistic...the secretaries are encouraging. The people here are great."

Optimism and passion for the work we do in delivering services that impact our candidates' lives is an operating principle. Much of the work in the initial phase of job loss is to re-orient the candidate from the debilitating emotions of anger and depression to become more positive and future-focused as they look for other opportunities. In order to help others be more optimistic, we need to be optimistic ourselves.

Martin Seligman, PhD, psychology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, has done extensive research into the area of optimism. In a study with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, he analyzed sales success and concluded that those with extreme optimism as demonstrated on his questionnaire, outsold pessimists by 21% in year one and by 57% in year two even **when they did not pass the industry test developed to evaluate potential to sell life insurance.**

One of the hardest things for our candidates to do is to network and/or sell him/herself to prospective employers because they are inhibited by the emotional reaction to job loss. Given the importance of optimism in being able to sell, our ability to help our clients learn to view their situation in a positive way becomes just as significant in importance as providing them with job leads. Our passion is clearly linked with our success.

What is your company passionate about?

Pritchard, Evan, Ph.D. *Motivation - Attributions & Optimism.*

Harvard Management Update, Volume 7, Number 5, March 2002

Keeping The Best And The Brightest: Workforce 2002

Marybeth Fedyna

What makes an organization successful? Jack Welch, retired CEO of General Electric, recently commented in the *Harvard Business Review* that success comes from building a work team which includes the best and the smartest people and putting them in leadership positions. They, in turn, should hire the best and the brightest for their teams. What follows will be an organization with the best individuals who will work hard and bring success to the entire company. Each day, these super employees are called upon to do more than just get the work out. They must improve services, evaluate processes, solve problems, and collaboratively work in teams. Competition is omnipresent. Clearly, the challenge for corporate America is to hire the best and the brightest, demand superior performance, but remember to motivate, empower, challenge and retain these employees as they grow and contribute within an organization.

When we talk about retention, there are 6 factors that must be addressed to meet the motivational needs of employees. They are: the actual job and related tasks, the temperament and management style of the manager, the organizational culture and environment, the dynamics of the industry, the time and energy commitments, and salary and benefits. Motivation generates success. Most of us remember some salient facts about motivational theories. Have the leading motivational theorists such as Douglas McGregor, Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg, and Blake and Mouton given us the answers to motivate employees? The answer seems to be that we cannot motivate others, but we can create conditions for people to motivate themselves, which in turn, creates satisfying working conditions leading to high retention.

In the dictionary, "motivation" is a noun under the word, "motivate: to stir to action, to provide with a motive." "Motive" is defined as "an impulse that causes one to act in a particular manner." What is that "impulse" and how do we get it to work for us? Why do some people work harder than other people? Why do some strive for promotions and others reject them? Why do some people leave a company when the perception of the company is that everything is going extremely well?

It is important to distinguish between internal and external motivators. The employee who is 100% motivated by external factors will be extremely difficult to please and to retain. The key is to hire individuals who have an internal motivation to succeed and to attain success. Working with these individuals is easier, and management can create the conditions for these employees to motivate themselves.

According to Brooke Broadbent, a professional trainer, there are six principles for motivating others: positive thoughts, enjoyment, feeling important, success, personal benefits and clarity.

Reverse all of these and be clear: clarity motivates. Plan your messages, oral and written. Take time to ensure that you communicate clearly. Check with others to ensure that they understand what you say.

To summarize, retaining highly desirable employees requires a commitment to understanding the corporate retention index and the factors that contribute to a positive work environment. Finally, it is also imperative to evaluate and implement effective training programs that will stimulate and satisfy the motivational needs of the best and the brightest to ensure that Workplace 2002 retains and succeeds.