Creativity Counts in the Job Search

Undertaking a job search in today’s economy requires time, creativity and endurance. Many articles online offer advice and strategies. Here, partially reprinted from Glassdoor.com’s blog archives (by Jacqui Barrett-Poindexter, MRW, May 30th, 2013), are five “top career initiatives of value” for your job search:

1. **Create and cultivate your LinkedIn presence.** With LinkedIn’s more than 200 million members, hiring decision makers, executives, and recruiters hanging around the LinkedIn water cooler every day, you don’t want to be absent from the conversation.

2. **Actively market your value ‘past’ the HR gatekeepers.** HR’s job is to reduce the resume funnel, to sift, sort and delete candidates. They’re often overwhelmed and understaffed. Find your way to the pot of career gold by directly meeting and interacting with people who can either get you to the person who hires – or who actually will do the hiring themselves.

3. **Quit staring at the online job postings.** The easy button doesn’t work in job search, and simply applying online to jobs is considered just that. Get out of your computer and engage with people who either hire or know people who hire.

4. **Don’t stalk hiring authorities or recruiters.** If someone has shown initial potential interest in interviewing you but then later cools off, know when to say when. Don’t keep emailing, private-messaging, calling them and such. While they may discourteously drop the ball in getting back to you in some instances, in others, they are just doing their job and closing the candidacy door. Whether this person holding your interest is someone you would be reporting to or a recruiter match-making to a hiring manager’s needs, they are busy, sometimes harried and have a million other balls they are juggling. Know when they are saying – or implying – “no,” and move on. It is in your own best interest, emotionally and pragmatically. Keep forging ahead.

5. **Volunteer.** While you may feel ‘giving’ your time during a stressful job search is counterintuitive, it isn’t. Through face-to-face or other personal-touch interactions, you can build new relationships and/or garner the ear of someone who takes a liking to you and wants to help you get into that next great gig. Also, be selective where you volunteer. It is okay to consider the potential to glean new contacts when selecting your next volunteer gig.

Alumni Profile: Michael Kopaigorodsky

Michael Kopaigorodsky graduated in January 2009 from the School of Public Health with an MSPH in Environmental Health Sciences and an emphasis in Toxicology and Risk Assessment. Since graduating, his career path has included diverse work settings and responsibilities. Michael’s first job was in state government with the Louisiana Office of Public Health as a Sanitarian, involving inspection and enforcement of the Louisiana Sanitary Code for affected facilities and consumer protection programs. Next he came back to Tulane to join the Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) Department where his work was primarily related to waste management and oversight of regulated environmental programs. Currently, he is employed with a private consulting firm based in the northeast called Woodard & Curran. He functions as EHS Manager at the Louisiana Cancer Research Center (LCRC) in New Orleans, a multi-institution consortium of cancer researchers from Tulane, LSU, Xavier, and Ochsner. At the LCRC, he implements and monitors comprehensive EHS programs with an emphasis on hazardous materials safety, security, and waste management.

Since Environmental Health is a broad field with a number of different real-world applications, Michael’s advice to students is to be proactive and talk with as many people in the field about their jobs as possible. Try and narrow down what type of jobs are most in line with your interests, then work with your advisor to select electives that will be most beneficial for those positions. By doing your homework up front, you’ll be in a much stronger position to identify and land the job you want when it comes time to graduate!