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I received a phone call from a very good friend of mine a few weeks ago. She told me that she had just been laid off from a job that she had held for the previous eight years. Obviously, she was very upset. She needed to find a new position quickly in a very bad economy and wasn't sure where to start. So, she started with me.

After getting a good idea of what she was looking for, I sent an e-mail out to my network of about 2500 people asking them if they knew of any job openings. What happened next was unbelievable.

Within 24 hours of sending the e-mail, I received over 200 e-mails and 25 phone calls from people looking to help my friend. Out of those calls and e-mails came over eighty job openings, many from well-known companies. After poring over all of her options, she decided to take a great position with a local company that provided her with better pay and better benefits than her last job.

After reading about my friend, you could assume the moral of this story is if you need a new job, network, network, network. However, that's only part of it, and I covered that idea last month. This month, I'm going to explain three ways to make your job networking more effective, more productive, and more successful.

1. When you tell people what kind of job you're looking for, keep your response as simple as possible. So many times people will tell me what they are looking for and their response is so technical in nature, I don't have a clue what they need. This often happens with people looking for a high tech job. What you are telling people might seem completely elementary to you, but, in most cases, your description goes right over the heads of most listeners. Plus, to make matters worse, very few people will ever say "Could you please explain what you just said. I didn't get it." People don't like to admit that they didn't understand something. It makes them feel less intelligent.

In the movie "Philadelphia," Denzel Washington's character always asked the opposing attorneys to explain it to him like he was a five-year old. The point here is that if you can explain something that a



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five year old can understand, everyone else will understand it too. So, always remember to answer the question using the KISS method: Keep It Short & Simple.

2. If I were to ask you to tell me about yourself, how would you answer? Would you spend a lot of time telling me about your educational background and your employment history and all the other things that seem to be important to you? While this might seem to be the proper response to “tell me about yourself,” it’s the last thing you should be saying.

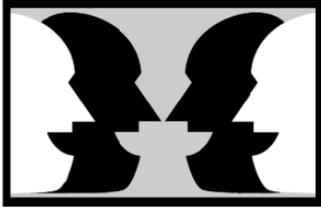
Let me break something to you. No matter how impressive your background might be, **NOBODY CARES.....yet**. All these people care about is what benefit you are going to bring to their organization. Do you know what **W.I.I.F.M.** means? It means **WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME**. The people who talk about what’s in it for other people are the ones who will grab the most attention.

When potential employers ask you to tell them about yourself, spend time focusing on why they should be hiring you. It’s not your history or your background; it’s all the benefits you will bring to their organization, such as higher sales, lower costs, less turnover, etc. When you address how you can fulfill **THEIR** needs, they will pay more attention to **YOUR** needs.

3. When people ask about the type of job you are looking for, do you tell them all the different positions that might spark your interest? Most people do this because they believe that the more information you provide people with, the better they can help you. Unfortunately, the opposite happens.

You should always try to focus on one area when you are telling people about your job hunt. People can only process so much information at one time. If you bombard them with too much information, you’ll confuse them and they won’t be able to help you.

Try to focus on one specific area or position or industry when you are telling others what you are looking for. Give them examples of companies that are of interest to you. Identify specific jobs that



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you would like. Once you give people a clear picture of the job you REALLY want, they will have a much stronger desire to help you.

Finding a good job in this economy isn't easy. By following the simple ideas I have presented to you, you should be able to find that next great job opportunity with much less effort, less stress, and more success. See you next month.