

## DEVELOPING MULTIPLE CONTACTS

### Business Contacts

Business contacts can be a very important part of your campaign. You need to review all of the people you have known in your past (this is a memory test). They could be people including:

- ◆ Those you have only been introduced to briefly;
- ◆ Those you associated with in past positions, such as vendors, distributors, peers, subordinates, superiors;
- ◆ Those who were instrumental in your education, such as teachers and professors;
- ◆ Those you've been socially friendly with, but with whom you have not discussed business or careers;
- ◆ Those who attended business meetings, seminars, or sporting events.

This is one area that most job seekers have difficulty utilizing, because "pride stands in the way of job search success." Most job hunters don't want people to know that they are unemployed. This is a critical mistake.

Professional business associates want to help each other because:

- ◆ Most people like to give advice;
- ◆ They like to give advice because they know that they may need help themselves some day;
- ◆ Some of them may even be close to the same situation as you are in!

The ideal approach to business contacts is to meet with each person and update him or her on the objectives of your job search. Do not ask for a job! This will only put the person on the spot and may preclude any further discussion. Ask for advice and referrals. Leave several copies of your resume with the contact so that it can be given to other people.

Be sure to follow up each meeting with a thank-you letter, once again outlining your objectives.

For out-of-town contacts, send them a letter requesting their assistance and enclose a copy of your resume.

### Types of Employer Firms

A professional private employment firm can be a good source, but be careful to select competent agencies and avoid those who make little or no attempt to match the applicant and the job. Many firms will extend themselves for their clients. Talk to others in your profession. The good or concerned agencies are usually known. There are several different types of private employment firms:

#### A. Recruiting/Search Firms

These organizations are classified as either contingency or retainer search firms. Contingency firms work on various job openings in many different companies and are paid by the company if the applicant they are representing is hired by the company. A retainer firm is retained by a specific company to recruit a specific individual for a particular position. They are placed on retainer at the beginning of the search and paid the remainder of the fee upon completion of the assignment.

## B. Licensed Personnel Agencies

Agencies serve as intermediaries between employers and job seekers. They interview people interested in new positions, evaluate their abilities, and classify them for possible openings. The fee is commonly paid by the individual, but applies only if he or she actually accepts a position with a company to which he or she has been referred. Some agencies refer candidates only to companies which agree to pay the fee. Check any agreement to see which basis applies.

## C. Executive Job Counseling

These firms work directly for the individual executive. Through counseling sessions (and perhaps with the aid of psychological tests), they help you to assess strengths, identify types of jobs in line with experience, abilities and interests, and/or prepare a career planning or a job search strategy. You pay the fee, which applies whether you secure a position or not.

## D. Executive Marketing/Placement

These organizations actively help the individual executive to obtain the attention of employers. They may assist you by preparing resumes, compiling lists of possible employers, providing interview training, and/or mailing letters and resumes presenting you to employers. You pay the fee, which applies whether you secure a position or not.

## E. State Agencies

All states have a Department of Employment Security that handles unemployment compensation and job placement. Although this agency is effective, it is normally understaffed and overworked, especially in the current business climate, and you may have trouble getting a counselor's time. The Department of Employment Security's focus was on low skill level jobs, but recently professional level jobs are being included and more complete assistance is available. The price is right too—it is free.

## Media Opportunities

This is one of your best chances to uncover potential positions before other candidates get involved. You should be reviewing major newspapers, The Wall Street Journal, business periodicals, and trade journals for such things as:

- ◆ New product introductions
- ◆ Product improvements
- ◆ Facility relocations/expansions
- ◆ Unusual advertising campaigns
- ◆ Personnel promotions
- ◆ Reorganizations
- ◆ Mergers/acquisitions
- ◆ News about company financial problems

You should contact the company with a cover letter and a resume, and follow up with a telephone call. You might mention in your letter the subject of the news you read, and how you may be able to help the company.