



Getting a Job in a Time of Recession

By Sara Tusek

The bad news and the good news

The economic news has been rather dismal lately. With an unemployment rate of over 8% nationwide, the U.S. is experiencing the worst recession since the 1980's.

Now, having said the obligatory bad news, let me give you the good news.

Getting a job in a recession is really no different from getting a job at any time, if you use the right methods, and spend enough time to do it right!

Here are a few questions and answers to help you get a job, right now, in spite of the recession.

1. Who's unemployed?

If you examine the unemployment statistics, you'll see that the highest levels of unemployment are among people with limited skills and education. This makes sense, as a person who is presenting a restricted work history and no proof of ability to learn quickly will be sharply limited in employment potential, in the eyes of employers.

Such a person, unfortunately, is often perceived as unemployable in an economy with downsized needs for unskilled or untrained workers. Although this perception may be completely wrong, unless the job-seeker knows how to overcome the employer's prejudice, the job offers will not come. *Anyone looking for a job right now should appear to be skilled and trainable.*

2. How can I make myself look skilled and trainable?

This process starts with you having a good grasp of your major accomplishments, talents, abilities, skills and values. You need to make a list of every situation (job-related or not) in which you learned something new, developed or used an important transferable skill, overcame opposition or showed leadership.

Transferable skills are not related to a specific job: they include communication, organization, interpersonal and leadership skills.

Once you have your list handy, you can approach employers and demonstrate that you are adaptable, quick to learn and productive in a variety of circumstances.

3. Are there any jobs, anywhere?

Yes, there are! The labor market continues to function, even if the pace is slowed down by the recession. People retire, are promoted, relocate and leave their jobs for various reasons. This creates job openings.

The challenge to the job-seeker is to find these jobs. Contrary to popular belief, the vast majority of jobs are never openly advertised. Instead, they are filled informally, through word-of-mouth and acquaintanceship networks.

This informal way of finding a job is called the hidden job market.

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4. How can I enter the hidden job market?

Although sometimes you can find a job through a want ad in a trade magazine or on-line, remember that the competition for these openly-advertised jobs is fierce. You can expect at least 100-200 applications for any attractive advertised job, making it that much harder for you to rise above the crowd and get that job.

You heighten your chances of success by concentrating your job search in the hidden job market, where the jobs are just as attractive, if not more so, than the ones that are advertised. The key difference is that the competition is much smaller and you are pre-screened for the job, because you found it from discussions with your

personal circle of friends. Someone who knows you tells you about the job, bringing you straight to the employer without resumes, cover letters, etc. *Too often resumes are used to screen people out; try to avoid having your resume be the first thing an employer knows about you.*

5. Who is in my circle of friends?

Past employers, fellow high school and college alumni, members of your church, fellow club members, professional association colleagues, neighbors, family friends—all of these people are potential leads to the hidden job market. The skills you need to develop to interact with this circle in a positive, non-exploitative way are your highest-level, polished

communication skills. A good way to approach these people is to help them first, get to know them as friends, then begin your search of the hidden job market.

6. Who can help me do this right?

Career counselors who've been helping people for many years can be a great asset in the job search. Their bird's-eye perspective on your personal career strengths and capabilities will open your eyes to the many possibilities around you. Even in a recession, you can get a great job!

Sara Tusek and her husband Jarda of the International Leadership Institute have been helping people find the job they like and can do best since the 1980's. You can become part of the next "21st Century Jobs" seminar (below) and get personal career assistance.

Careers is back!

We started publishing this newsletter in 1985, at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. In 1987 it migrated south to The University of the South in Seawane, TN, where we published it till 1993.

After giving it a 16-year rest, we're reviving *Careers*, in response to the needs of people to find a career in the 21st century.

We want to help you find the job you like and can do best!



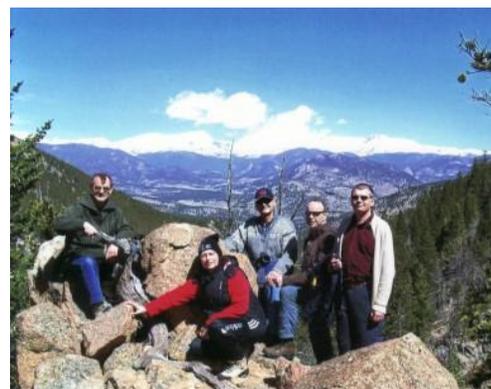
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International Leadership Institute's "21st Century Jobs Seminar"

The "21st Century Jobs Seminar" gives you access to the practical advice of Institute President Jarda Tusek, who has more than 27 years of experience in helping people get jobs that correctly match their skills, abilities, interests and goals with the right business or organization.

This seminar uses our newest book, 21st Century Jobs, as its workbook.

We aim to help you, the job seeker or career changer, to identify your unique set of gifts, talents, skills, interests, accomplishments, values and dreams--and then to find ways to make those dreams into reality, bringing all of your potential to the job which will use this potential to the fullest: **the job that you will love, and can do best.**



International Leadership Institute Travel-and-Learn program in the Colorado Rockies!

The next "21st Century Jobs" seminar begins in August.

Please email Jarda at jbt@ili.cc for more details.