

CareerSmart Advisor™

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

A Note From Dave

Expectations are high for an improved job market in 2005, presenting new opportunities for those looking to exert more control over their careers.

At ExecuNet, we encourage our members to be the creators of their own professional destinies, and this issue of *CareerSmart Advisor* highlights several ways to take charge.

A good mastery of language helps put networkers in the driver's seat. On page three, Deborah Brown-Volkman outlines ways to prepare for your next spontaneous networking conversation with phrases that leave positive impressions. Moving from "the talk" to "the walk," Fariborz Ghadar's article on empowerment puts control firmly back in the hands of managers, encouraging them to lead their staff with vision.

One of our recently-landed members shares his story with us, illustrating the value of the networking we encourage at ExecuNet. He was hired at one of his targeted companies after a nine-month search, but his relationship building began many years before, while he was fully and happily employed.

Finally, *CareerSmart Advisor* is now under the direction of new senior editor Robyn Greenspan, who will continue to provide you with strategies and solutions for your career success. After demonstrating expertise in many aspects of the recruitment advertising industry, Robyn transitioned into journalism, where she covered e-commerce, customer relationship management, interactive marketing, and the general tech industry. You can track Robyn down at Robyn.Greenspan@execunet.com.

Sincerely,



Dave Opton
Founder & CEO
ExecuNet



Target Your Move And The Job Will Follow

By Robyn Greenspan

Senior-level executives, who are accustomed to charting their own courses in the workplace, can bring that same level of control to choosing their address. Rather than allowing a job offer to dictate a relocation, executives are finding that they can target a desired geographic area first.

"This is happening a lot," said Rick Taylor of search firm Ratliff & Taylor, Inc. "Quality of life and family are becoming much more important to executives."

While some executives initiate a move to be closer to family, others are just ready for a change of scenery. In either case, taking the preparatory steps to enter a new regional job market will help ensure a smooth move.

Home is Where You Build It

Whether you define "home" as your birthplace, the area where aging parents reside, or the town where your child goes to college, due diligence will reveal what a new local job market holds.

Career counselor Linsey Levine suggests that the exploration phase begin at least six months before the move is considered. "Start with research, which is easy to do online, through local news publications, regional magazines, business journals, etc, and learn as much as you can so you can ask intelligent questions."

Executive coach Beth Hand says executives can become better known in a new market by becoming actively involved with the local media. "If you have a long lead time, write articles that fulfill the business journal's need and present your expertise."

Locations that Plan for Your Future

While some executives make moves to be closer to family, others are targeting areas where they would like to retire. Warmer climates for sailing or places where one can ski for half the year become more attractive as executives inch toward retirement years.

If you don't have a specific locale in mind, an August 2004

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Learnings From Landings

Regional Meeting Attendance Sparks Transition Victory

David Bologna, a 45-year-old member who exemplifies the ExecuNet philosophy of “giving back” just sent Dave Opton his “landing story” to pass on to you. David put ExecuNet to work by participating in the webinars, attending regional networking meetings and using our career transition resources. David’s experience truly illustrates the power of networking.

Dear Dave,

I joined an amazing nonprofit organization — Cornerstone Schools (visit us at <http://www.cornerstoneschools.org>). We’re an independent, private school association with a mission to build the model of excellence in urban education. I’m the Executive Director of Institutional Relations, reporting to the Chief Operating Officer. I lead our Partner Development Office and drive all development revenue streams and marketing communications.

I learned throughout my career transition that networking is about giving back. You have assembled a talented team of career management coaches and user-friendly resources, such as your webinars.

I have a “landing story” that I’d like to share with you. I began an active search in January 2004 and landed with an amazing organization nine months later. ExecuNet networking and career resources opened the door for me. I am deeply grateful.

I joined ExecuNet in February 2004 and attended my first Regional

Networking dinner meeting in March. The ExecuNet Detroit market meeting facilitator, Marge Larsen, shared a local Partner Development opportunity in a nonprofit organization that evening with the attendees.

I followed through on this lead and secured an interview with the COO and Director of Development in April. I had a terrific discussion with them. We concluded that the position available at the time wasn’t the right fit for the executive-level responsibility I desired. I sent a personal note of thanks the same day to each person. The Director called me after he received my note and just wanted to tell me how impressed he was that I sent a personal handwritten thank you note. This was one of the “lessons” I learned using your career transition resources and webinars. Steve Conner and Coach Nick Papadopoulos’ webinars were especially helpful, and I highly recommend them to anyone seeking a career coach.

The Director called me a month later and asked if I would join the organization at a special event where I could share my

life experiences with the event attendees. I gladly said yes and attended the June event. It was a fabulous experience and my connection to this organization grew.

In August I contacted the Director as part of my networking plan and asked for a lunch meeting. We met for lunch the next week, and he shared he was leaving this organization after ten years to pursue another opportunity. I asked about his position and he said the COO was actively searching for his replacement. He informed the COO of my interest, and I set up an interview with the COO the following week.

In preparation for this meeting, I worked with the President of a successful advertising agency. The President put me in touch with his agency’s Executive Director, and together we crafted a Credentials presentation book that included my customized résumé, case histories showcasing my functional skills and results achieved, letters of recommendation, and a one-page list of references. On the cover of the presentation book I downloaded my target organization logo and brief mission statement. Oh, did I mention that the agency prepared five customized presentation books at no charge in five business days? The

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FastTrack Programs – Feb/Mar 2005

Hosted by Dave Opton, founder and CEO, ExecuNet

Smart Search Series:

- 2/10 — **Converting Interviews to Offers with DISC** — Linda Dominguez
- 2/15 — **How to Land the Job You Want When You’re Over 45** — Jean Walker
- 2/17 — **Running Under The Radar: How to Look for a Job When You’ve Already Got One** — Karen Armon
- 2/23 — **How To Sell Yourself As A Consultant** — Charles Moldenhauer
- 2/24 — **Winning Interviews: Converse, Connect, Convince** — Judy Rosemarin
- 3/9 — **Market Yourself: You’re a Big Ticket Item** — Steve Conner
- 3/15 — **How to Land the Job You Want When You’re Over 45** — Jean Walker

Register today to guarantee your participation in the programs of your choice! Call ExecuNet’s Member Services at 1-800-637-3126 or visit www.execunet.com/fasttrack.cfm

Insider Insights

Successful Job Search Techniques: What To Say To People Who Do Not Know You

By Deborah Brown-Volkman

Whether you are actively seeking a new position or you are keeping your eyes open for a good opportunity, sooner or later in your job search you will have to speak with someone who you do not know.

First conversations can seem scary and intimidating. “What will I say?” “Will they want to help me?” These are valid concerns, as long as you do not let the questions stop you from having the conversation.

No one wants to ask for help (we are a society of lone rangers), but people do like to provide help. If you would help someone with a job search, why wouldn't someone else want to help you with yours? Maybe the reluctant one is not them (the help provider), it's you (the help seeker), and what you need are the right words to ask for what you want.

As a career coach, I work with many clients who are stuck regarding what to say in different aspects of their job search. They know they should have a 30-second introduction, but are unsure how to word it. They know they should follow-up with people they've met, but are unsure what to say. As a result, needed tasks and next steps are not taken; not because of a lack of will, but because of a lack of the right words.

Below are tips and words you can use so the people you don't know can become your best champion and pathway to a better position.

What Do I Say to Introduce Myself?

Your 30-second introduction is an important tool for your job search. It creates an impression and you want the impression to be a good one.

Deborah Brown-Volkman is the President of Surpass Your Dreams, Inc., a career and mentor coaching company that has been delivering a message of motivation, success and personal fulfillment since 1998. Deborah is also the creator of the Career Escape Program™ and author of *Coach Yourself to a New Career: A Book to Discover Your Ultimate Profession*.

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Information to include:

- Your name
- Type of position you seek specifically
- Your skills and strengths
- Background or accomplishments.

Where job seekers go awry in the 30-second introduction is that they are often not specific enough. The person they are speaking with does not understand what they want and cannot refer them, because they do not know what they are looking for. The more specific you are in your 30-second introduction the better. Example: “I have a background in finance and can do pretty much anything in this area,” resonates better than, “I am looking for a CFO job in a large manufacturing company located in the NYC area.”

Here's a detailed example: “My name is Joan Jobseeker. I am a marketing executive in finance and technology. I am looking for a director of marketing position in a bank, investment firm or technology company. I have been a marketing executive for over 20 years and one of my biggest accomplishments was creating \$2 million in extra revenue for ABC Systems by developing a new direct mail campaign. I was able to produce this result for ABC Systems in six months. ABC recently moved its entire operations to London, and I chose to stay here. Do you

know anyone who may be interested in my qualifications?”

Prepare, rehearse and know your 30-second introduction well. This will be your icebreaker and your entryway to job leads. And, don't forget to smile when you introduce yourself and be enthusiastic. Whether you are introducing yourself in person or over the telephone, your passion (or lack of it) will come through.

What are Powerful Questions That Will Allow Another Person to Open Up to Me?

The person asking the questions has the power in any conversation. Your goal is to use this power in a positive way. Ask questions that show you are interested in what the other person has to say. Sure, you are focused on a result, but you are also trying to create a great contact or working relationship both now and in the future. Here are some ways you can get the conversation going — in nearly every networking opportunity.

Calling A Company To Get Information: “I am calling today because I am looking for someone in your organization who is seeking a top-notch marketing executive. I have been a marketing executive for over 20 years and one of my biggest projects created \$2 million

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Your Career Advisor

Empower Your Team To Boost Results & Your Career Prospects

By Fariborz Ghadar

In my discussions with executives around the globe, I notice that most corporations have articulated a vision, mission and value system, and believe that their associates are empowered. If companies want to be successful in the marketplace, they must give managers the necessary support. Most importantly, a firm has to learn from its managers' mistakes and move forward, and managers need to trust that the powers-that-be are serious about walking the walk. Managers need to feel supported and directed.

Companies should:

- Tell managers what they *can't* do, what would blow the business up.
- Encourage entrepreneurial thinking and initiative.
- Provide managers up-to-date, accurate information necessary to be responsive and "intelligent."
- Allow managers to fail, to fail small, early and quickly, so that they can move forward.

Wal-Mart, for example, allows its managers to "do the right thing." Wal-Mart's managers are empowered. They can paint the aisles blue or orange. They can post competing prices or not post competing prices, or accept competitors' coupons or not accept competitors' coupons.

These managers have access to management information system providing the necessary data to determine whether the decisions are successful or not. Have the sales picked up since the aisles were painted blue? The Wal-Mart manager knows instantly the impact of the initiative. In turn, Wal-Mart, the company, gets to experiment with countless small initiatives all over the world. Wal-Mart's empowered employees respond in an entrepreneurial way to the market according to Wal-Mart's credo and values —

Fariborz Ghadar is Director of the Center for Global Business Studies at Penn State. He serves as a consultant to a score of major corporations, governments and government agencies and regularly conducts programs for executives of major multinational corporations, including Aramco, BASF, CalPERS, Cisco, Eastman Chemical, Ericsson, Lucent Technologies, Northrop Grumman, UBS, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the World Bank. He served as an investment banker at the International Finance Corporation (World Bank), as well as research coordinator of the Harvard Multinational Enterprise Project.

and Wal-Mart knows which of those ideas are good ones and spreads that knowledge around instantly. Wal-Mart encourages store managers to experiment with a "store within a store" concept to see the success of boutique-type operations in the larger store environment.

A few years ago, for example, a thunderstorm tore a big piece off the roof of a Wal-Mart store. To patch the hole, the manager put a sheet of Plexiglas up there, and business went on as usual. A few weeks later, the regional manager called up to congratulate him for doing such a great job lately. Certain high margin items in the store were selling very well all of a sudden. Which items? Women's cosmetics. Well, that's interesting, those happen to be on display right underneath the Plexiglas section of roof. Hmmm, maybe we're on to something. Women like to buy cosmetics under natural light. Women have known this for ages. But stores like JC Penney and Sears have forgotten about it.

Within six months, all new Wal-Mart stores were built with natural light above the section of the store where women's cosmetics are sold. Some organizations move quickly when they see a good idea, others wait for permission.

Many firms try to do this, and many firms fail. The powers-that-be are generally enthusiastic about the idea, and so are managers. But somewhere in between, the old guard falters. It turns out, they're afraid, too. Is the firm really serious about this or

not? If the managers in the middle are not one hundred percent certain, then lower-level managers pick up on that doubt.

When people say that leaders need to manage less and coach more, that is what they mean. It is often the low-level managers who really understand what's going on with the customer and in the marketplace. Managers — from the CEO on down — need to get that information from lower-level managers, provide them with the guidelines and support to do what they think is best, and provide a safety net in case they slip.

In other words, the challenge for senior management is, how do you allow middle and lower managers to make a decision? How do you communicate to each other all that you know? Do you really understand who works in your company.

All companies undergo organizational changes due to product lifecycle acceleration, but companies that empower managers tend to fare better in the market. I interviewed a former manager, Fred, a few months ago. He was about to retire and is probably retired now. I saw him and his wife in Kingsport, Tennessee. Over dinner, I asked Fred what he thought about all the organizational changes that had happened over the years at Kodak, and what advice he would have for junior managers coming up through the ranks.

Fred thought about that for a few minutes and came up with an answer.

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Ask The Expert

Focus On The Facts

Q ■ “When voluntarily resigning a position because of philosophical differences, is there consensus advice regarding listing or not listing a ‘sound bite’ explanation in the résumé for a prospective employer’s consideration?”

A ■ In your résumé stick to the facts — *who, what, when and where*. The only *why* should address positive value — why you should be hired — focusing on your achievements, skills and talents.

Never provide an explanation that may portray a former employer negatively, it’s usually best to avoid that portrayal for very simple reasons. The person who is listening to you can only suppose that if something goes awry with hiring you, there’s a good chance you might say negative things about them.

Insider Insights

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in extra revenue for ABC Systems. Who is the best person I can speak to about my skills and experience?”

Speaking with someone at a networking event, job fair, party, etc.: Your goal is to establish rapport and find things you have in common with others.

- “What brings you to the event today?”

Your Career Advisor

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He said, “I don’t know what advice I could give, but I can talk a little about regret. I don’t regret making decisions and finding out they were wrong. And I certainly don’t regret the decisions I made that were right — I’m very proud of those. But what I do regret are the times when I wanted to do something and decided not to, because I was worried something would go wrong and I would look like a fool.”

As Fred and I discussed it further, the truth became clear. The lesson for today’s manager is to not be afraid of doing the right thing. If you know the direction

Judy Rosemarin is an ExecuNet meeting facilitator and the founder and president of Sense-Able Strategies, Inc. For 20 years, Rosemarin has been providing customized Career Management, Executive Coaching and Training for senior executives in major corporations, as well as to individual leaders who want to gain more competence and executive presence in their roles and careers. You can find more information at <http://www.sense-ablestrategies.com/>.

The explanation for leaving doesn’t have to be packaged as some friendly sound bite. It should be an accurate picture of who you are, not how the former firm or their people are. It should be about what you really want to do as a solution generator for the next firm. Highlight your value, your enthusiasm and stay totally future-focused, because that’s where the interviewer is looking. This applies to search people, human resources folks and hiring managers. Everyone wants to see how you might

fit into their future feature film.

It might be all right to leave the position off the résumé entirely if you were there for a very short time. However, somehow the word gets out and lying just doesn’t work for most people. I recommend truth or limited truth always. ■

Don’t forget: ExecuNet’s Free Résumé Review is available to all Members, along with résumé-writing advice found in ExecuNet’s online Knowledge Centers.

- “Are you here to learn something new? What is that?”
- “What do you do? That sounds very interesting. Tell me more about that.”
- “What’s the toughest part of your job?”
- “What do I do?” (Give your 30-second introduction.) Speak passionately about what you do. Enthusiasm will win over even the toughest person. At

the same time, if you see that someone does not want to talk to you, respect this, and move on. Gauge their reaction. If they change the subject, look at you strangely, or look away when you say your 30-second introduction, then your introduction may be off or they may not be the right person to help you. If they say, “Tell me more,”

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your company is going in, and you think the decision is right, just do it. If you make a mistake, that’s okay. Your organization should understand. In order to thrive, it needs to learn from those mistakes and move forward.

Despite all our concerns about global strategy and implementation, we end up with managers. Although senior leaders and senior consultants spend a lot of their time trying to work out the big picture, what we really need to do is solve the managers’ dilemma.

Accelerating change demands acceleration in strategy formulation and implementation in an organization geared for

renewal. We need managers that can deliver on evolving strategies while responding to emerging opportunities in dynamic environments. Our organizations, in turn, need to facilitate, rather than frustrate, managers as they try innovative approaches by experimentation.

By creating such an environment we encourage organizational self-renewal. When the passion, commitment and imagination of our managers is unleashed, it results in global organizations with firm-wide wealth creating capability that have mastered the keys to success, no matter in what economic environment we find ourselves. ■

Target Your Move Continued from page 1

American City Business Journals' analysis of employment data found that Phoenix was the major market that created the most jobs in a year — 41,200 or nearly 800 per week.

HOTTEST JOB MARKETS June 2003-June 2004

City.	Job Growth Rate
Las Vegas, NV.	+4.8%
Dover, DE	+4.7%
Laredo, TX.	+4.7%
Green Bay, WI	+4.1%

COLDEST JOB MARKETS June 2003-June 2004

City.	Job Growth Rate
Saginaw, MI	-3.5%
Enid, OK.	-3.4%
Cape Cod, MA	-2.1%
Salinas, CA	-2.0%

Source: American City Business Journals, Inc.

Other cities that outperformed their neighbors in their respective size markets and geographic regions, according to ACBJ, include St. Louis, MO; Glen Falls, NY; Washington/Baltimore; Charleston, SC; McAllen, TX; Bryan, TX; Daytona Beach, FL; Jacksonville, FL; Dubuque, IA; Waterloo, IA; Casper, WY; and Reno, NV.

If your move includes involvement with small businesses, Portland, ME was identified as the large market leader for small businesses among the 91 U.S. metro areas that ACBJ analyzed. Medium market Bend, OR and small market Bozeman, MT were also recognized for their support of companies with fewer than 100 employees.

Unemployment rates should also be taken into consideration when contemplating a move to a new region. The U.S. Labor Department found that Yuma, AZ led the nation in unemployment in October 2004 at 20 percent. Six California cities rounded out the top 10 for the highest unemployment rates.

Bryan/College Station, TX boasted

the lowest rate of unemployment during October 2004, measuring just 1.7 percent, followed by Fargo, ND/Moorehead, MN, and Gainesville, FL at 2 percent each.

Building Local Connections

Once you've identified the area where you want to live, it's time to build your local network. An expansive look into your contact list will likely reveal connections into the new job market you are trying to penetrate.

"Start with the people in your current geographic area and ask them who they know in your targeted location," suggests Hand.

"Your current network can help you reach new connections in other areas who can serve as guides, to help you learn what it's like to work in another city, what organizations or associations there are in your potential field, and others to speak with who might be close to your field in some way," says Levine.

Another way to bridge the geographic gap is to identify the affinity groups in which you already participate in your current geographic region. ExecuNet networking meetings, professional associations, religious organizations, alumni groups, hobbies and sports often reach across regional lines and can be easily contacted. Let the groups know that you are considering a move to the area, and would like to tap into their membership.

"Get the membership list and start connecting with these folks by phone," says author and résumé writer Louise Kursmark. "Be sure to use good networking strategy and ask for advice and ideas, NOT a job," warns Kursmark.

Paying Your Own Way

Executives who have already identified the area they want to call home, and are willing to absorb their own relocation costs, have the advantage over those looking for a new company to foot the bill.

"Corporations don't want to pay \$50K to \$100K to relocate an executive," says Taylor. "Candidates should even indicate in their cover letter that they are willing to pay their own

relocation costs. It demonstrates commitment to becoming involved with the local community."

To avoid immediate deletion during the résumé screening process, experts recommend using a local address on all of your job search correspondence. When job postings indicate the position is open to local candidates only, out-of-towners are often not even considered.

"Candidates who use an address which is not in the area where the position is often don't make the first cut and do not have an opportunity to explain they are willing to pay their own relocation costs," says executive coach Joy Reed Belt, Ph.D.

"Having a local address and phone number often gets candidates past the first screen of applicants," Belt explains. "If the company has decided to give first preference to local candidates in order to avoid relocation costs, they may sort the applicants by location without reading the accompanying information about the candidate."

"However, [executives] need to be upfront in the cover letter that they are planning, but have not yet moved, to the desired area but are using someone's address who lives in the area while they are conducting a job search," says Belt.

Become a Familiar Face

Executives looking to make a move can garner additional attention by becoming involved in the prospective community. The accessibility to the local job market will allow you to present yourself as a serious candidate worthy of consideration.

"Depending on the time and distance involved, travel to the region and become a regular at one of the [local affinity group] meetings. That may even involve heading a task force of special projects — anything where you can deliver value to the group and get exposure to the business community ideally within your chosen target industry or industries," says Hand.

ExecuNet hosts more than 50 executive networking meetings per month around the U.S. and in Canada,

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Target Your Move

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providing the ideal venue for connecting with other professionals. ExecuNet's Member-to-Member Directory serves as a method to personally connect and exchange information about local recruiters, contacts, companies and industries.

Set Up In-Person Meetings

Joy Reed Belt suggests that executives take a proactive approach. "It is a good idea for the candidate to plan a trip to the area where they want to relocate and to call the companies who might have positions. They can say they are in the process of moving to the area and will be in town on a certain date and request an interview."

When quick accessibility and

repeated face-to-face exposures are warranted, it may be easier for executives to first make the move, and then establish business connections. "Get there!" is what Rick Taylor recommends. "Get to the desired location, find residency, make contacts, and then look for a job."

Final Advice

Taylor cites a client in his mid-40s who has spent the bulk of his career in Europe, but is now targeting companies on the East Coast of the U.S. to be closer to family. "He's ready to go home."

But Karen A. Armon, CEO of Alliance Resources LLC, issues some caution before bags get packed. "If you are going back home, know that things have changed. And if you are new to the area, it's not what it looks like. Make sure that

you research everything before you make your move."

Before exchanging your current life for a completely new one, Armon recommends taking only one major step at a time. "Too many times, executives want to change location AND industries AND land a position of greater responsibility. That is just too much to try to accomplish. Look for positions in the same industry — even if it is lateral."

With the proper planning, a geographic move can yield brand new possibilities — personally, as well as professionally.

"The opportunity to move and find work in a new environment is energizing, and allows you to recharge your batteries or reinvent your career to align more with who you are at this point in your life.

Insider Insights

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or "That's interesting," you probably are describing what you do well to someone who can help you.

- "Thank you for your time. You are a very interesting person, and I learned a lot from what you said. I will get back to you as promised on day/date. I hope you enjoy the rest of the event."

Finding Out If Someone Is Interested In My Skills Or Knows Someone Who Is:

The way to find out if someone can help you is to ask them. Muster the courage and ask. The miracles and the goals you are trying to achieve in your career will take longer if you are trying to reach them alone. Tap into people. They are your best and quickest resource to a new position.

Great Question To Ask: "Do you know someone who can help me?" The beauty of this question is you are giving the other person the opportunity to help you without putting them on the spot. "Do you have a job for me?" puts the other person in an awkward position if they do not. And then, they will avoid your calls because they know you want something they cannot deliver.

Five tips to make your networking conversations more productive:

1. Do not spend too much time talking with one person. Spend 5-10 minutes per person. You do not want to monopolize someone else's time, especially if they were gracious enough to say they would help you.
2. Listen well and maintain eye contact. This shows that you are interested. Do not interrupt the other person when they are speaking.
3. Offer to help. Use phrases like, "What can I do for you?" "How can I help you?" "I have something or someone that may solve your problem. Would you like me to send it to you?" The best way to build a successful working relationship is to give something first.
4. Make notes on the back of business cards so you do not forget who you met and what you discussed/promised.
5. Follow up as soon as possible.

Following Up and Going Forward

Follow-up is important. You cannot get a new job without it. And follow-up is in the hands of the person who wants something. That person is you. Don't expect people to get back to you. (This way you will not be upset or angry if they don't.) If you go on the premise that people are busy and they are not doing anything to you (making judgments, purposely not getting back to you), then you will be in better shape. You will be able to objectively navigate yourself through the follow-up process. No emotions. No hard feelings, just a structure you can follow without meaning.

- ✓ When you meet people, many will say: "I'll get back to you." This is an open-ended day and time that means nothing and just keeps you by the phone

waiting. Try not to end any conversation with this phrase.

- ✓ If someone says "I'll get back to you," ask, "When can I follow-up with you again?" "Can we set up a time now for me to call you?" Yes, schedule it right then and there.
- ✓ If you call at the scheduled time and get voicemail, you can remind them of your appointment. "It's Wednesday at noon, and I am calling today at this time because I promised you I would," is stronger than "It was nice meeting you a few weeks ago, and I wanted to follow-up on our conversation." You also have the freedom to call again and say, "I am sorry that I missed you yesterday at noon. Please call me so we can have the follow-up call I promised

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Learnings From Landings Continued from page 2

President remembered something I did to support his agency a few years earlier and said he wanted to help with my job search. Networking truly works!

The COO and I met and had a great discussion. He complimented me on my presentation materials. I learned the position had been elevated to an Executive Director level. I expressed my strong desire to join his team. I was asked to complete two homework assignments, including a plan of what I would do in the position to achieve the position goals. Again, I prepared and sent a thank you note the same day. The COO called back the next week and scheduled two interviews for me with the organization's CEO and President. I received an offer the following week and began my new position in September.

As I reflect upon this experience and begin the new year, I feel blessed that this

opportunity came to fruition. I am energized and helping prepare children for life. It's a wonderful feeling knowing that our work is making a difference in the Detroit community.

I know many people who have jobs, yet they aren't fulfilled. I can sincerely say my work is fulfilling, and I'm doing exactly what I want to do at this point in my career.

Job transitions are a difficult time, yet can be rewarding. The things that worked for me were believing in myself, having wonderful support from my wife, living in the moment with our two adorable children, networking, building relationships with target organizations, and developing customized marketing and sales plans to these organizations. I had a short list of six target organizations.

I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to Dave Opton and the ExecuNet organization. Special thanks to Marge Larsen, Eileen Vernor, Steve Conner and Coach

Nick. Please share my thanks with them and keep up all of your great work. You are MAKING A DIFFERENCE in the lives of executives seeking career changes and network building.

One of the things your organization also shared was to stay connected and keep building your network. Having said that, I plan to attend next Monday night's Detroit networking dinner. It will be good to see Marge and Eileen again. I plan to bring a copy of "my learnings" to this dinner meeting as a way to share some things that worked for me. If my story can help a fellow executive in transition in some small way, I am more than happy to share it. I can't say enough how important it is to build a relationship with your target organization(s).

Make 2005 a GREAT YEAR!

With regards,
David Bologna ■

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- to have with you." It really works.
- ✓ Do not be afraid to ask for a follow-up call or meeting. You are not being pushy. You are recognizing that people are busy and following-up with you (although important to you) may not be the most important thing to them. You take the pressure off them, and put the work onto you. You are being helpful and respectful of their time and energy.

- ✓ If the person did not commit to a follow-up time (this happens), here are some good times to call them.
- ✓ Call on Thursday and Friday afternoons. On Friday, people are more relaxed and getting ready for the weekend so there is a good chance they will pick up the phone. Plus, they will be in a better mood. Avoid Monday mornings. Just because you were anxiously waiting for an answer all weekend does not mean that person wants to talk with you on

Monday morning.

- ✓ Leave voicemail messages at night. People check their phone messages first thing in the morning, and there is a good chance you will get a call back before you start your day.

If you think about it, the people you know today were once people you did not know. All relationships start somewhere and that somewhere starts with you. ■

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