Absolutely Ready -- Turbocharge Your Job Search

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Imagine being asked to search through your office for a missing file and not being told which specific file it was. Wouldn't that be difficult? You might find files but you may never actually find the "right" file. Similarly, in order to turbocharge your job search, you first have to know exactly what you are looking for. In other words, you have to become Absolutely Ready.

This call will help you begin to determine when a position is ideal for you and when it's not. Then you'll learn how to go out and find it. As long as you keep your eye on the goal, you will have a much better chance of achieving it! It all comes down to the Who, What, Where, When, and Why questions which we will be covering tonight. Then we will save the best for last and discuss how to take all of this information and turn it into action!

My Job Search Experience

In 2015, I landed the "perfect" job in 2 months (during the holiday season) in a state on the opposite coast for 25% higher than the job was posted for. In 2019 I landed 4 recruiting contracts, one of which was with in an industry that I always wanted to be in. In 2021 I had to think outside the box when COVID eliminated my recruiting contract.

What?

Career aspirations
- What career matches your personality?
- What tasks would you do for "free" because you love them so much?
- What job titles are you aiming for?
- What are the requirements for your ideal job?
- What are you missing in your background if anything and how can you attain it?

Targets
- What are your target industries?
- What are your target companies?
- What are you missing in your background if anything and how can you attain it?

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Work Environment
- What kind of culture do you fit in best with?
- What kind of pace do you prefer?
- What size company do you prefer?
- What level of structure do you prefer?
- What kind of office space do you prefer?
- What work/life balance are you looking for?
- What kind of boss do you want/not want?

Compensation
- What salary are you aiming for?
- What salary can you live with?

Where?

Location, Location, Location
- Where do you want to work? Are you willing to relocate?
- Where is the actual building that you will be working in and how is the commute?
- Do you want to work from home full time or not?

Who?

Networking
- Who in your network can help you get there?
- Who in your network doesn't know that you're looking yet?
- Who do you not know that you need to know?
- Who will you meet this week as you network?
- Who can you pay it forward to?

Why?

Demonstrating your passion
- Why do you want to work in this industry?
- Why do you want to work for this specific company?
- Why do you want this specific job?
- Why you are the winning candidate?

When?

Timing Is Everything
- When should you apply for positions?
- When should you expect to get called from a recruiter?
- When is it time to take a survival job, a contract job or a lower paying job?
- When is it time to ask for help?

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How can you take all of this information and turn it into action?

- Searching and finding the right opportunities
    - Create a Spreadsheet
    - Use top job boards: Monster & Careerbuilder & Ladders & Craigslist
    - Use aggregators: Indeed, SimplyHired, ZipRecruiter
    - Use niche boards: SHRM, VirtualVocations, Media Bistro, DICE, Idealist
    - Set up job search agents – use quotes – "Marketing Assistant" vs. Marketing Assistant
    - Be found by recruiters by having a posted resume
    - Never sign an exclusive agreement with a headhunter for one company
    - http://AbsolutelyUncommon.com

- Searching and finding: LinkedIn
    - Be found by recruiters by having a LinkedIn profile that is optimized
    - http://PowerfulProfiles.com –
        - this was recorded 2 years ago but it's still very relevant content – ask us for a discount
    - Explore the power of LinkedIn
        - Search the job board
        - Set up agents
        - Find hiring managers
        - Find headhunters
        - Find alumni

- The resume
    - Be the captain of your own career
    - Do not be concerned about resume size
    - Add a specific headline to every resume
    - Mention volunteer experiences
    - Mention accomplishments/honors
    - Add the right keywords
    - Specify languages and how well versed you are
    - Check for grammar, spelling and formatting
    - Omit graphics and fonts that will not be recognized by applicant tracking systems
    - Avoid religion, politics and sports

- The cover letter
    - Always send one
    - Always personalize it
    - Add in why you match the job description
    - Be sure to add in your "why"
    - Check for grammar and spelling mistakes
    - Get a sample cover letter at letter@AbsolutelyAbby.com

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- Phone screens
    - Always be available
    - Make a good first impression
    - Walk, talk & smile
    - Avoid speakerphones and headsets
    - Give your salary range and then ask "Does this fit within your budget?"

- Prepping for the interview
    - Accept every interview
    - Practice, practice and then practice more
    - Look on Glassdoor.com for comments about the company
    - Review the About Page, press releases and Google
    - Find interviewer's interests or commonalities
    - See if any of your first connections knows the interviewer
    - Prepare questions for each interviewer
    - Prepare answers to the standard HR questions
    - www.Top12Questions.com

- Dressing for the interview
    - Ask the recruiter, "If I wear a suit will I be overdressed?"
    - Don't wear perfume or cologne
    - Don't wear too much makeup or jewelry
    - Have a neat hairstyle or one that matches the culture
    - Wear the color of the company's logo

- The interview
    - Smile!
    - You are in sales & marketing
    - Avoid bragging
    - Do not bash your former employer
    - Avoid sports, religion and politics
    - Learn how to explain terminations, gaps, & jumpy work history
    - Everything can be explained
    - Ask permission to take notes / drink water
    - "I don't mind", "It's fine", "It's no problem", "Like I said" and "To be honest"
    - Avoid the best friend trap
    - http://AbsolutelyRockStarInterviews.com
    - http://AbsolutelyQualified.com
    - http://OvercomingElephants.com
    - https://AbsolutelyVideoriffic.com

- Closing the deal
    - Ask the how, when & how often
    - Beware of smalltalk in the hallway (or on zoom)
    - Send memorable thank you notes

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- Negotiating the offer
    - Prep your references
    - It's ok to ask for more vacation time
    - It's ok to ask for more money
    - It's ok to ask for a sign on bonus
    - It's ok to ask for practically anything **assuming you know the risks**
    - Don't stop looking prematurely!
    - Having a counteroffer MAY help with negotiations
    - http://EarnYourWorth.com

10 Ways to Stay Positive During Your Search

- Find a job search buddy
- Take classes or get certified
- Find a hobby and do it once a week
- Attend networking events; realize that you are not alone
- Pay it forward
- Spend time with keepers and avoid sweepers
- Consider emotional support groups/individuals
- Spend time in nature
- Take time for self-care
- Be Absolutely grateful
- Bonus # 11: Realize that your pot of gold may Absolutely just be around the corner!

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Actual Resources That Worked

Networking e-mail that helped me land a part time contract

Hi Arnold –

Congratulations on your career success since Kaplan! It's been a long time since we worked together but I smile every time I think of it.

I was wondering if I could network with you for about 10 minutes on the phone one of these days. I'm currently in search of a new recruiting contract and was wondering if you might have some industry contacts who could use my help. My claim to fame is handling a large req load and also saving companies hundreds of thousands of dollars by avoiding headhunter fees.

Abby

Intro to the networking colleague who helped me land the gig at CBS

Hi Tom -

Congratulations on landing a new job at Onyx! It's been forever since we hung out at Whine & Dine but I still remember those days with a smile. I was wondering if I could network with you for 10 minutes one of these days. I'm in between jobs right now and I'm just looking for some advice from someone that has been in my shoes recently. Please let me know if/when you have time.

Abby

This former colleague forwarded my request to his entire network

Dear Stan -

It's been a long time since we worked together at Alpharma. I remember the positions that we worked on together like as if they were yesterday. Those days were the highlight of my recruiting career.

I'm currently looking for some part time recruiting work to supplement my income as a speaker and career coach. Is there someone in your network that might need some part time recruiting or HR assistance? I'm extremely mobile so I can literally relocate anywhere for the right opportunity.

Thanks in advance for taking the time to think about this!

Abby

My first boss from 1989 who hired me to do contract recruiting & then headhunting starting in September 2019

Hi Gary -

It feels like a hundred years since I started working for you, but I still remember the wonderful family atmosphere that you cultivated. I essentially grew up with you and the entire team, and have so many positive memories.

I saw the article about you on LinkedIn this morning, and it made me want to reconnect with you. Do you have some time on Monday or Tuesday for a phone call? I have an idea that I'd like to share with you that could really help your company.

Abby Kohut

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A networking email that resulted in 6 interviews at the company

Hi Ellen -

It was nice to see your name pop up in my LinkedIn feed tis morning. I am currently finishing up a recruiting contract which started off as a 4 month assignment and has turned into an 18 month assignment.

I am currently looking for recruiting roles similar to what I fulfilled at Kaplan. I found the vacancy at Edison Schools and I believe it's not only an ideal match with my background in healthcare and education recruiting, but also with my interests. I applied online but I was hoping you might be able to send a note to Kim Smith on my behalf, given that you know my quality of work at Kaplan, where we all worked.

I am attaching my resume to Kim for you here.

Thank you for sharing my resume with Kim. Enjoy your weekend!

Abby

The thank you letter to my CBS boss

Hi Rob -

As I sit here in Times Square watching Minnie Mouse, the Naked Cowgirl and the Statue of Liberty Twins, I realize that entertainment is always around us if we are willing to just open our eyes. TV has been a major part of my life since childhood. We would gather around my father's easy chair to watch All In The Family, The Jeffersons, M*A*S*H and Maude. I have always appreciated entertainment and I would truly enjoy the experience of recruiting for the network that started it all.

I would also enjoy working with you personally. My dry sense of humor matches well with people that have a similar one. I may seem quiet to you, but you'll soon see that I will produce more results than your average bird and do it with a smile. I know you said you're not a big networker, but you don't have to be. With my nationwide network and my 25,000 LinkedIn connections, I will help you find a slate of HR and HVAC candidates that CBS will be proud of.

I told you that my contracts over the past 12 years happened as a result of networking. What I neglected to mention is for several of those contracts I was working for the same person. Vice Presidents enjoy working with me because I get the job done and because I do it economically. I'm the least high maintenance person you will meet but am also the most dedicated recruiter you will meet. This is why several of them have hired me in the different companies that they have worked in. I simply love to source and hire people - and I make them look good.

I look forward to joining your team whenever you're ready for me. I'm sure we can work out the logistical details if you agree that this is as good a match as I believe it is. Thank you again!

Abby

A cover letter of a hired candidate which I walked into the hiring manager

Upon reviewing my resume you will see that I have extensive experience in strategic procurement and marketing services. However, before you focus on my resume let's discuss MONEY.

MONEY excites me! I'm sure you will agree that MONEY is exciting. What is even more exciting is the challenge of SAVING MONEY! Now that really excites me! I love challenging my vendors to see how far I can negotiate a fair deal and enjoy the game. Throughout my career I have leveraged excellent pricing in procurement. I have developed substantial relationships with good vendors who are fair and talented in producing quality products. By doing so, I have saved companies thousands of dollars while raising the bar on quality.

Passion for the challenge is something I would love to share with you. Please read through my resume now and let's get together to discuss how I can help your company by producing the best products at substantial cost savings.

Sincerely,

Helen Dubois

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A second cover letter of a hired candidate which I walked into the hiring manager

Hey CBS Sports!

I am excited to apply for your Freelance Graphic Design opening. Not only do I have all the experience and qualifications desired, I also have a lot of background in designing for fitness and sports companies.

I have worked in small agencies, as well as big Network teams. You may have noticed I'm currently based out in Pittsburgh, PA where I do side work for the Pittsburgh Pirates, but I am looking to move back to NYC. Once I saw this opening I had to jump on it. It feels like a perfect fit.

If you look through my portfolio you can see I've done all sorts of work plus digital and hand illustration is a huge passion of mine.

To hear back from you guys would be extremely exciting. I would love the chance to talk to you about why I think I'd make a great fit.

Hope you have a nice day.

Jennifer