

Be Bold on Your Own Behalf!

Make it easy to find a job by making it easy for others to promote and refer you!

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If you don't know where you might fit in this job market, why would you expect anyone else to know? Get intentional and clear about what you want and the positions for which you're qualified, and then educate others and ask for their help! Asking others to refer or recommend you will make it easier and make it a more pleasant experience in finding a job.

Having been a recruiter in a previous lifetime and now an executive leadership coach, I can predict with some degree of certainty that the job you want is probably not going to be found at a recruiting agency. When unemployment figures are low, the recruiter is there to locate and find people who are already employed to fill the present position with the employer. When the unemployment figures are high, the recruiter is most often used to screen candidates out due to the volume of applicants. This would mean that your recruiter may be more likely to screen you out, rather than in, during an economic downturn!

The good news to share is that a smart employer is always looking for high performing individuals even when there's not a position available in the company because they know excellent people are hard to come by in any economy. (The book *Good to Great* by Jim Collins discusses how great companies hired good people first and then figured out where to place them in the company). Employers also trust that excellence calls forth excellence; in other words, great people associate with other great people. Therefore, a personal referral or recommendation by someone who is respected will set you above and apart from other candidates in this or any market. So make it easy to find a job --- get people to refer you!

Now the question is, how do you get someone to make this kind of a recommendation on your behalf? Here are six steps to make it easy for people to know how, where and why to refer or recommend you.

Educate people on your skill sets, abilities and talents. You may assume someone knows what type of job you are looking for given your previous job title, but chances are they don't! Educate them on what you did, how well you did it, whether you loved it or not, what made you unique in that arena and what other companies can use your particular skills and talents. Be as specific as possible about how these skills, talents and abilities can be used.

Let them know how transferable your talents are! You have talents and abilities that will transfer to all types of positions, so help your referral source know what kind of positions those might be. For example, if you were a supervisor in manufacturing, you would share that this position required people skills, the ability to engage and enroll others in the company vision, the ability to hold people accountable for doing their jobs, and the ability to inspire them to develop and grow beyond their capabilities while managing them and getting the job done in a timely manner. Every one of these skills

are applicable anywhere there are people employed, period! Given these skills you could be a manager in many different disciplines: a teacher, a business owner, sales person, CEO and more. With these abilities, you could qualify for a host of job possibilities. If your referral source has an outline of your skills and talents, it will make them easy to identify places they can recommend you.

Be specific about what kind of job you want! Share your MPV (minimum, primary and visionary) job. Create a vivid and clear picture to make it easy for people to see where you would fit. Following the example of the supervisor position above, you might share something like, “My ideal and **visionary** job would be to move into a management position within the manufacturing industry.” The **primary** job might be to maintain your position as a supervisor in a similar industry, and your **minimum** job might be to go to work at a fast-food chain restaurant as manager on the night shift. This gives them three places they can consider when thinking about how to support you in finding a job and recommending you to others, in addition to giving them some leeway for making suggestions without offending you.

People want to help you! Make it easy for them and ask for help. Talk to everyone you meet about what you’re looking for and ask for their help and consideration. There’s an acronym in the Bible that few people know about; it’s A.S.K.! “Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:8). How can someone help you if they don’t what or if you need something? Asking others for assistance is honoring to them and crucial to your success. And, you have to ask for their help...don’t assume it! When you ask, “Would you be willing to help me?”, wait for their response; there are research studies that indicate when people are asked to do something specific and they commit, they are far more likely to keep that commitment!

Be intentional and direct about what you would like and how they can help you. The clearer you are about what you want and what you will consider, the clearer people will be in knowing how and where to refer you. Be bold. Do not be timid because when people refer you to someone they respect, they want to know that they are going to look good for having sent you. If they know you are respectful and that you will sell and present yourself well, they’ll be much more inclined to support you.

Follow up with them! If your friends, associates and colleagues are like me, they need time to think about whom they might know and how they might help. They also may need time to share the information with others that you provided to them to see who else may know of someone that might want to employ you. Confirm a specific time and date when you can follow up with people about any possibilities or ideas they’ve generated, and then contact them at the time specified. If they know you’re coming back to them to follow up on your conversation and get their ideas, they will be far more responsible to you for keeping their word. If you are prompt and precise in your follow up, they will feel confident that you are professional and they feel respected for the time and effort they have invested on your behalf (even if they don’t have a recommendation to offer immediately). This will increase your chances of a referral or recommendation from them if something does appear on the horizon down the road.

If you make it easy for people to know how to help you, they will exceed your expectations and they’ll feel privileged to support you! They want you to be successful; they want you to find a job. But if

people have to dig information out of you to figure out what you're looking for, they won't be able to recommend you. Not only that, they'll feel that if they refer you to someone, that person will have to dig for information too. No one will be better off for expending the effort and energy.

I wish you great success. Again, remember, if you don't know where you might fit in this job market, how would you expect anyone else to know? Get intentional, clear, ask for help, tell people what kind of job(s) you would consider and be bold on your own behalf!

For more information on finding a job, visit www.radicalleadership.com