

Manage Your Career

Words of Wisdom from a Staffing/Recruiting Expert

The summer is waning. Leaves were wearing autumn-coloured tips some two weeks ago. And yesterday we drove by a maple that was shockingly, entirely clothed in brilliant yellow. The nights are cool, and birds are flocking, ready to migrate—hiking along the Saugeen River we were treated to a rare sight: a season of kill deers, perhaps 50 or so birds. During the summer one sees these birds in pairs; a season is surely a sign of autumn.

With the autumn, our attention returns to work life, to the need to distinguish ourselves to ensure job security and career success. But what is success? Which brings me to the words of wisdom. I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter.

As always, do share this newsletter to anyone who may benefit from its information.

What is success? Consider the following, written by Nigel Corneal, who is a Staffing and Recruiting expert based in Toronto (<http://nigelcorneal.blogspot.com/>). (I asked Nigel's permission to reprint his blog and he obliged.)

You cannot fail having given your best effort if you have the right perspective of success. Never judge your accomplishments by the achievements of others or their perceptions of success, and never judge the accomplishments of others by your own. Consider the effort, ability, and resources required and available to accomplish the goal and then either seek needed assistance, offer encouragement, lend a hand, applaud the effort, or be silent, but do not disparage; and remember that constructive criticism is still criticism and only constructive if it helps to build up and not tear down.

So very true and so very eloquently put! I met Nigel through LinkedIn, and followed his profile to his blog. I couldn't have expressed that better myself; it's perfect. I am grateful to have met Nigel, if only virtually via LinkedIn.

LinkedIn

Speaking of LinkedIn, after a good year of "working it," I am reaping benefits. People contact me for resumes; request, as did Nigel, that I join a group; thank me for replying to their career-related question posted therein; and ask me to write articles for newsletters. The next New Leaf newsletter will provide a few tips on using LinkedIn to find work, research topics, or find people.

Hidden Job Market

Speaking of finding people, most job hunters know that the vast majority of jobs are not advertised; these are in the so-called "hidden job market." But how does one access these positions? A future New Leaf newsletter will delve into this mysterious pool of jobs, so quietly awaiting the right person to stumble upon each, and how to access the very people who might be able to offer you one of these unadvertised positions.

And, just for fun, here follows an article recently printed in the Waterloo Region Record. I had fun considering a Superhero's resume strategy and hope you'll enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it!

As always, please do send your questions, comments, ideas, musings, disagreements, conflicting information; I enjoy hearing from my readers, and don't ignore career-related questions, no matter how controversial or difficult. Now for that Superhero resume.

A Superhero's Resume

A strong job search begins with the writing of an influential resume. With the work that goes into preparing a resume—the intense self-evaluation, the quantification of the value of your work at previous employs, and the crucial strategic component—your job search derives benefits far beyond the words on the page. You clarify what kind of job you want and why you are qualified, which then inspires confident job-search conversations.

But so many job hunters don't put in enough effort. Too many rely on the same old—those boring, uninspired, ever-present position description style bullets.

Let's have some fun with resume writing by considering a super hero's resume. How many interviews would Superman land if he wrote "Provided rescue services"? How many more interviews might he land if he put in a superhero effort to write a powerful resume? Here are a few super-bullet samples:

- Nimble read body language clues; applied advanced knowledge of human behaviour; maintained top physical stamina to battle evil forces, and keep my municipality safe.
- Practiced daily to leap tall buildings in a single bound; trained to be faster than a speeding bullet; worked with a coach to be stronger than a locomotive.
- Fought several types of foes: slippery sand-based, hot and fiery ones, sneaky conniving ones, and seemingly beautiful but secretly evil ones.
- Responded to one-time immediate threats, and also to ongoing, intellectually and physically challenging threats.
- At last count, have overcome 40 super-foe battles, 30 small-time bandit skirmishes, and numerous rescues of damsels in distress.
- Recognized for my feats with several municipal awards.

Superman might change up his bullets according to the position to which he is applying. He may decide to emphasize his physical prowess, super-human powers, deductive thinking, or negotiation skills. Our Superhero knows that a resume is not just a bunch of words strung together; he knows that his resume has to convince the reader that he has what the position needs, and that the employer will be reap benefits from his hire.

Today's job hunter would do well to copy Superman's persuasive style. Persuasive writing is purposeful, well-crafted, with its words deliberately selected to convey a specific message.

Superman's no dummy. He realizes that a powerful resume can land a job offer, and that it may also lead to a better job offer! His value to Metropolis City rings through loud and clear; any city would be eager to hire his services. Does he provide rescue services? Yes indeed, but if he wants to win out against Spiderman and Batman, he knows he has to put in some time and come up with convincing reasons that he should be hired instead of his respected rivals!

If you really want that job, put in a super effort to write an influential resume that beats out your own respected rivals.