

Measuring the Effectiveness of Your Job Search

LOTS OF ACTIVITY IS NOT ENOUGH—YOU NEED TO MEASURE *QUALITY* TOO

What do our competitors say? They measure the effectiveness of your job search based on your *activity* level alone: How many ads are you answering per week? How many meetings are you having? Yet, we meet many job hunters who have been searching for nine months or more before they come to us. Their searches are often lacking in *quality*, not quantity. It took us four years of research to determine how you should measure the *effectiveness* of your search—in terms of Stages 1, 2 and 3—a concept mentioned in some of the articles in this magazine.

Most job hunters say, "I'll know my job search is good when I get a job." That's not a very good way to measure your search. You need to be able to tell *as you go along* whether you are heading in the right direction.

As you go along, the basic measurement tool to use in your search is this: Do you have six to ten things in the works? That is, are you talking to six to ten people *on an ongoing basis* who are in a position to hire you or recommend that you be hired?

The quality of your contacts varies with where you are in your search.

In the beginning of your search, you will speak to as many people as possible in your target markets (targeted industries and fields)—regardless of the organization for which they work. At this stage, you simply want market information. If you plan to stay in touch with them on an ongoing basis, they are Stage-1 contacts. To get your

momentum going in the beginning of your search, keep in touch (every few months) with six to ten people on an ongoing basis.

Over time, you will talk to perhaps 60 to 100 people during the course of your search. Some of those contacts will bubble up and become Stage-2 contacts.

Stage-2 contacts are people who are the right *people* at the right *level* in the right *jobs* in the right *organizations* in your targeted areas. They are senior to you, perhaps future hiring managers. Maintain contact with six to ten of the *right people on an ongoing basis*. That's a full Stage-2 search. You want the right people to know you and remember you. If these people are saying, "I *wish* I had an opening right now. I'd love to have someone like you on board," then your search is working. Keep on doing more of the same.

If they are *not* saying that, then either your target is wrong, or your target is correct and you are positioning yourself incorrectly. Fix whatever is wrong and keep on going. Every job hunter should focus most of his or her energies on Stage 2.

Now, you are in a full Stage-3 search when you are talking to six to ten people on an ongoing basis who actually have a job opening or who may have the opportunity of creating a job for you. Remember that these do not have to be ideal jobs, and our research shows that five possibilities will fall away through no fault of your own!

To get more things going in Stage 3, build up Stages 1 and 2. Focusing on a few

Stage-3 possibilities is the wrong strategy. Instead, get more Stage 1 and 2 things in the works.

Your goal is to wind up with three concurrent offers and then to pick the one that positions you best for the long run. Look at the "How to Find a Job" section of our website, and take the free mini-course. It will give you perspective on how well you're *really* doing. And see our book, *Targeting a Great Career*. ●

Kate Wendleton, Editor-in-Chief



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