

The Five O'Clock News®

from America's Premier Career-Coaching and Outplacement Service

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"One organization with a long record of success in helping people find jobs is The Five O'Clock Club."

FORTUNE

Celebrating 25 years—
America's Premier
Career Coaching and
Outplacement Network for
Professionals, Managers
and Executives

Everyone Gets a Job!

Make Sure You're Headed in a *Satisfying* Direction.

by Kate Wendleton

Last week, I met Andy, a mid-level accountant who simply wanted another job in accounting. Where he worked didn't matter to him. He just needed money so he could live his real life at home. He said he had never had a truly satisfying job.

The week before, I met an executive who earned almost \$1 million a year. His story was remarkably similar. His first words to me were: "I don't need to be happy or satisfied in a job." What he meant was that he had always excelled — he was always a top performer — regardless of job satisfaction. I told him he could have both — excellent money and a job that he thought was terrific.

These two people both knew what they were good at and what they could sell to a future employer. Getting a job will not be a problem for either of them. But somehow it never dawned on them that a job can — and should — be *enjoyable*. And to move in that direction, it's not enough for a person to identify his or her strengths. In high school, I scored the highest in the state of New Jersey in math. I thought God was telling me I should be a math major. But I almost flunked math because I didn't enjoy it. It's important to identify not only what you do well but also what you *enjoy* doing.

We want our job hunters to have three concurrent offers. It doesn't always happen, but that's the goal. That way, they can select the job that positions them best for the long run.

Coaches (not ours, of course) focus too much on the person's past and present and actually can keep people stuck in careers and industries that are not right for them. The Five

O'Clock Club has campaigned for about a decade to get *all* of its coaches to include some kind of visioning exercise in their assessment process. What does the person want to *do* or *be* five, ten, twenty years from now? We insist that new Five O'Clock Club clients who are in their fifties must do *at least* a Fifteen-Year Vision. Our assessment process is so effective



"Erwin's love for computer software is only matched by his love for nature."

Also in this issue

◆ A Host of Legal Headaches for HR ◆ Lots of Successful Job Searches

that 58% of those who attend the Club end up changing careers — they change the field or industry they are working in.

For many, a change in environment is enough. Many attorneys, for example, tell us that they want to leave the field of law. But it may be that they need to leave the law firm environment and work on the client side or for the government. One law firm partner who was miserable realized, through The Five O'Clock Club assessment process, how much he loved the subject of wine. He collected wine and knew a lot about it. He ended up as senior legal counsel for a large winery. The change in environment made all the difference in his job satisfaction.

Most people have not had the opportunity to think about a long-term plan. They just plow ahead and take that next job. But we prefer that each person has a vision. As Kim Hall, our VP of Client Services, says, "A fuzzy vision is better than no vision at all." Then you can investigate that vision and see if it makes sense.

All Five O'Clock Club outplacement packages allow for careful assessment. That is, they are for a minimum of one year (and cost less than three-month programs elsewhere) so the job hunter feels less pressure to simply get a job and is more willing to spend the two or three days it takes to go through the assessment process with a private coach. A one-year package means that the employee can take consulting assignments to earn money while trying out a new field. And because of the one-year package, a person can come back to us if the new job doesn't work out.

Job search ought not to be just about getting a job. *Everyone* gets a job. It's all about heading in the right direction. Sometimes the job hunter has to take an intermediate job that takes him or her on a half-step toward that dream.

For ten years, we ran a program in Harlem called Workforce America: a bridge from jobs to careers for inner-city adults. These motivated and ambitious adults were often stuck in jobs

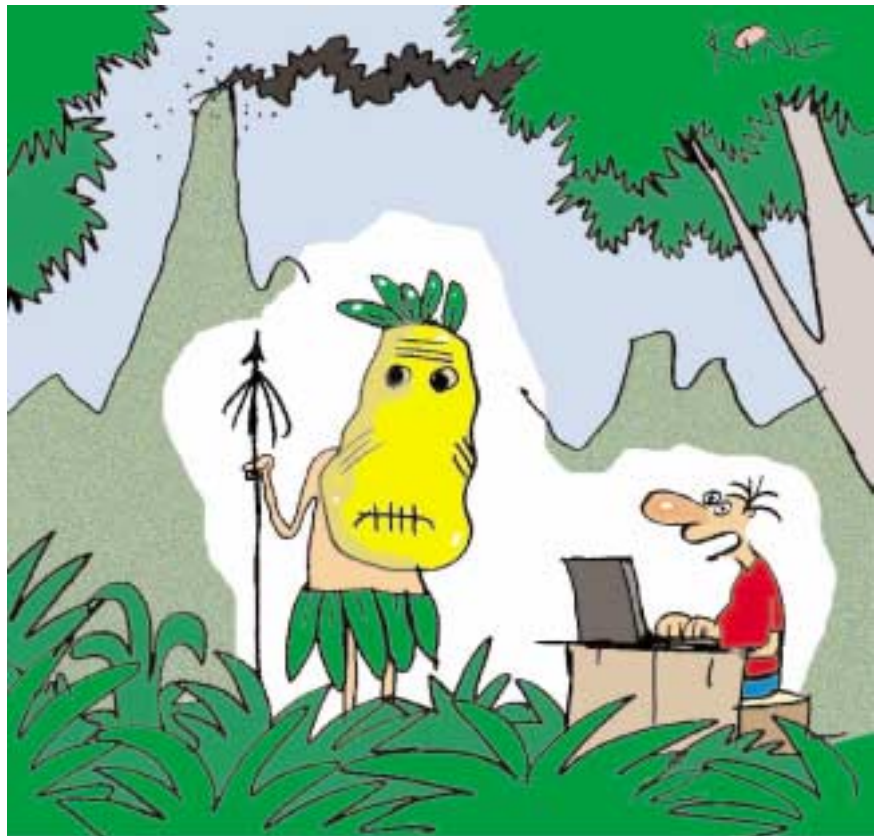
that paid very little. Some even had college degrees but could not get out of the rut. People stayed in a low-paying job for decades, or went to another one without building a *career* for themselves.

Lela for example, aspired to become a securities industry professional. She had been temping in various dead-end positions, took the expensive coursework to prepare for the Series 7 certification exam, and resolved to take temporary assignments only in the securities field. She soon landed a two-week assignment as a sales trading assistant in equities. She developed her "pitch" to convey her career goals and commitment to permanent employment and asked the managing director to consider her for a permanent position when one became available. Rather quickly and coincidentally, a position opened through the sudden resignation of a sales trading assistant. Lela was selected

to replace her without additional interviews.

This also shows what we say at the Club: Don't chase openings; chase companies. Most jobs are created for people. If Lela had applied for an open position, she would have been unlikely to get it against the other candidates with more traditional qualifications. Instead, select the places where you would like to work — whether or not they have an opening right now. Form relationships, keep in touch, and develop the skills you need to do the job.

All Five O'Clock Club professionals, managers and executives need to do what Lela did. Decide what you would enjoy doing and also do well. Develop a vision of your future, and go for it — slowly but surely. Ten years from now you will be ten years older, whether you are satisfied in your worklife or not. So you might as well be satisfied. ●



"One day I just woke up and said to myself-- hey, thanks to the computer, I can work anywhere."