

30 Ideas

THE IDEAS OF SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH

**Practical and easy-to-use tips
for the modern job search.**

...

Includes advice on:

creating a job search strategy

maintaining a positive mindset

building a career networking plan

and much, much more!

Tim Tyrell-Smith

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Introduction

How it all began...

In 2007, I became officially unemployed (in between) for the first time in my career. It was joyful, stressful, freeing, exciting and frustrating all at the same time. And, in some ways, I needed to make a game of it.

To find unique analogies that I could use to maintain a positive and confident psychology. You see, there is something very stimulating about being on the job hunt. You get to test your skills against many others and in front of a great variety of hiring managers. Where else do we really get to compete in life anymore?

Plate spinning as the first analogy for job search, career and life

The act of plate spinning was the first analogy I identified because its focus was on efficiency – the best, most productive use of time spent. And it led to the original name I used for the blog and website. You see, I found during my own search that people were tapping into too few resources and using them up beyond their usefulness. And I think we have opportunities to apply this idea broadly throughout life.

I originally called it “spin strategy”

Building this community is an act of thanks to all who helped me during my own search. To get started, I created a name and a logo (after all, I'm in marketing) and started to share the idea with a few friends. I then created a set of tools to help job seekers identify and determine how best to use their network – all based initially on the analogy of plate spinning. As the concept matured and caught on, job seekers wanted more than just a concept or a tool. They wanted a broad menu of resources so I started to blog and began to create free downloads to

support the job search. And plate spinning became just one of many ideas to share.

Then I made some changes . . .

About 15 months into creating the concept, I decided to make a change. To re-jigger things a bit. So I re-named the blog and combined it with the website. It became Tim's Strategy. After all, it did originate in my head, right? And every day I write or build a new tool, the strategy gets more complete. So now I am working on ways to pull it all together. There are ebooks, an eWorkbook, and a new hard cover book in process that I hope to get published. But in reality, the content is not mine alone. Like anything that is created from experience, it is never one person's strategy alone. But it's mostly mine!

It's A Competitive Market

But, let's be clear. Tim's Strategy is still a very young concept. I hope it will become a great resource for lots of people. But today it is an interesting idea waiting for you to share it with others. There are a lot of great resources out there on the web to career and personal development. I only hope Tim's Strategy can add to the quality content available and do so in a fun and inventive way.

So, what's next?

I continue to write on the blog and look for new ways to bring this concept to life. We may do a few national webinars or seminars in Southern California to get away from the computer, meet you and share our ideas in a more personal way. Looking for a speaker? Let me know!

The rest? Well, that's up to you.

I hope you enjoy this book. It represents the best of the blog since its inception. Now you might be asking: what's the value of this book when much of the information is already out on the blog? Well, I've re-edited some of the blogs, organized them into three critical sections and I'll tell you, it is really difficult to find content that is two months old. And older content might be just what you need... right now!

So I've organized the book around three key areas. After writing for 15 months and completing 231 posts, these are the three big ideas. The three things you have to get right in order to succeed in job search. They are:

- Job Search Strategy
- The Psychology of Successful Job Search
- Smart Networking

Each section includes 10 chapters to help you succeed in each critical area. And this new 2010 edition includes 2 bonus chapters!

These are ideas. Easy to read and easy to implement. And you can start tomorrow.

I am so grateful to share these ideas with you!

Now it's your turn... who can you share these ideas with? Feel free to share this book with anyone in transition, out-of-work or unhappy in their current job. It may be just the thing they need!

Good luck out there!

Tim Tyrell-Smith

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Oh, and send me a note with your feedback. Would you?

Job Search Strategy

1

Do You Have A Job Search Strategy Or Are You Just Spinning?

Memories of the Big Top

When I was a kid I used to love the circus act of plate spinning - all those plates and only one person keeping them afloat! The beauty of it, of course, is the efficiency of only re-spinning the plate when it starts to slow down.

The Analogy for Job Search

As I was in the middle of a recent job transition, plate spinning struck me as a compelling analogy for job search. So I started to think about plate spinning as it related to my own efforts to find that perfect next position. In the analogy, each plate represents the different sources of information or resources used to network (I call them micro networks). How many plates was I spinning and how often was I going back to each one?

How Was I Doing?

After a quick review, I found that I had too few plates spinning and was re-spinning the same ones way too often. Sound familiar? I was inefficient by definition! I also found that I had my favorite plates, many of which were really fun to spin but were either not very effective or didn't respond to extra spinning. Here were my core plates: recruiters, job search engines, and on-line networking groups.

Compelled by Instant Gratification

If you are like me at all, you love sites like LinkedIn®, The Ladders®, Monster® and RiteSite®. The visits are highly rewarding for those of us who need immediate gratification. They also play a clear and important role in maintaining a wide scope in your search effort. The reality is that there are many more plates out there to spin. And, as you might expect, each has its own value.

Tough Times Call for a New Strategy

Being out of work in an uncertain economy can be stressful and frustrating. Being out of work without a strategy is just downright silly. Yet most people I met who were in transition did not have a specific plan. There was outward confidence, activity, pride, but often not much else. So what does a job search strategy look like and how do I get one?

Introducing the New Strategy

So what makes sense is a new, efficiency-based job search strategy. It helps place the right efforts against the right resources to maximize the return in job search. Here's how it works:

1. IDENTIFY your plates

These are basically all of the micro networks that make up your overall network (e.g. a recruiter or an old college friend). By identifying each micro network you can then begin the process of comparing the relative value of each one and how often each should be resourced or “spun”.

2. VALUE your plates

Each plate gets a value based on specific criteria. Once valued, your plates are ranked giving you a real sense of where you should be spending your time.

3. MEASURE your spinning stick

How open is this micro network to helping you? You can do this by measuring your spinning stick. It shows the relative distance between you and your micro network. In plate spinning a shorter stick is less awkward to work with and in this strategy it suggests a closer relationship to your network - one you can tap into more deeply and more often.

4. CHOOSE a spin cycle for each plate

Based on the value and closeness of each network, you can decide how often to spin each plate. Once the analysis is complete you can have confidence in a specific plan to make sure your networks know that you are looking and are reminded about your skills and targets.

5. KEEP a log

Can you remember the last time you e-mailed that recruiter? Do you remember what feedback each of your networks provided last time you spoke? A log tracks every contact with your micro networks allowing you to measure the ongoing value and return as time goes on. So, ask yourself, do you have a strategy or are you just spinning?

2

Job Search Advice. It's The Same Stuff We Learned As Kids.

Sorry if this job search advice sounds preachy. I don't mean it that way. If it weren't for the people who break a few key rules, this article would not be necessary.

But because I want you to succeed and because I realize that all of us are prone to mistakes and narcissistic behavior during a search, here are some things to remember.

1. Job search can be stressful but it's not the end of the world.

When I was a few years younger (OK, I was 28) and had just become a husband, I shared a feeling with a new uncle in-law. "Uncle Mike", I said, "I'm stressed." Well, Uncle Mike has lived a bit. A tough rugby player (in his day) from England. His response? He laughed. It turns out that I had a bit to learn about stress. My newly married stress was the tip of the iceberg. My point? Being out of work is a challenging time but it is not something that should alter who you are or how you carry yourself socially or during interviews. Take the long view and use the stress as a motivator.

2. Let's be honest.

It can be tempting to stretch the truth. People do it all the time on resumes, in cover letters, during networking events and, painfully, in interviews. Why painfully? Because it does more damage than good - especially in the long term. In a past article, I spoke about not disguising your true self. So, review your resume and, yes, make sure you are your biggest cheerleader. But, don't give yourself credit for things you didn't do or awards you didn't earn. Those are likely not what you will be hired for anyway.

3. Try a little kindness along the way.

During your job search, there will be plenty of people to step on or walk over. Folks who have become stuck and need a fresh perspective, a leg up or some friendly advice. But, you might say, "who am I to deliver that value? I'm in the same boat!" In my opinion you are uniquely qualified for just that reason. Your advice comes from recent experience and your leads come from qualified recruiters or hiring managers. If you want to help someone, they are easy to find at a networking event. Look for the deer in the headlights people over by the bar. Want an easy way to help? Download the *Watchlyst*™ from my free tools page and easily track the job objectives of those people in your network.

4. R-E-S-P-E-C-T.

Respect the time of hiring managers and recruiters. You do this by realizing that they have full-time jobs along with plenty of other candidates to review. Get your candidacy strongly placed in front of them and then back off. Daily e-mails to check your status are not going to get you in any sooner. Respect the reputation of your network. If someone has provided a lead to you, please don't abuse it. And please don't suggest that you have a stronger relationship

with this person then you actually enjoy. Respect fellow job seekers by giving them the benefit of your experience - even if you are 10 years their senior. You never know where that next lead will come from, right?

So, these are four things I learned early on in life. Sometimes we all need a reminder to follow them again at certain times. And job search is a great time to do so.

What lessons do you follow? And what rules do you see being broken out there?

3

Warning! This Job Search Is Under Construction.

During my job search back in 2007 there were days when I felt I needed a man with a stop sign out in front of my house. He was there to direct traffic around my house but, more directly, around the constantly changing nature of my job search.

You see, I learned a lot in 2007. And just because I am writing about my experiences now does not mean I was an expert back then. I made mistakes. My expertise has grown as a result of my writing, my networking and the testing of ideas with people who are in the middle of their own job search.

You may know there are two different types of construction. The kind that happens in most U.S. cities and the kind that happens in Chicago. If you have ever travelled to Chicago or surrounding areas, you will have heard the phrase: “There are two seasons in Chicago. Winter and Construction.” So what does the traffic look like around your house?

To kick off your effort, you need to spend significant time up front on your job search strategy. Whether you are doing a re-paving, adding a lane or building a bridge, those first 2-4 weeks are critical.

Not only do they set the urgency and importance of your effort, but they also establish your early credentials.

IMPORTANT LESSON #1

All those early e-mails and networking meetings will include your most trusted and reliable contacts. Don't ruin the unique opportunity to re-establish yourself with poorly constructed marketing materials.

So there is the up-front effort that we can all agree is critical. What then? Well, you can't just sit still with your materials in a changing market, can you? Isn't that job search suicide? Actually I think you can.

- *Once you have established your job search objectives.*
- *Once you have confirmed your special qualities, your measurable successes and your relevant qualifications.*
- *Once you have built a complete set of marketing materials for yourself.*

Then you can go out and take action with these tools. As a very astute person said on my *LinkedIn* group, you can go get some "Face Time!" All the preparation in the world won't do anything for you without brilliant execution. Go out and meet the key people that need to see your skills and personality proven - in person.

You won't get a job offer over the phone. I've heard stories of this happening, but I don't believe it.

Interviews and job offers come when you make an impact on someone. Either the hiring manager directly or someone who knows him or her and says to them. "Wow, you have to meet this person".

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