



CATS

RECRUIT

Executive Appointments: toll free 1800-289-8822 • Classified Jobs: 1800-289-9988 • www.st701.com

How to look for opportunities

Searching for a job in a time of change needs a clear strategy

HOW should you approach companies now? Why would companies even talk to you? Where would you look? These are questions that job seekers have been asking themselves over the past few months.

The first step in such times of change is to accept the changes. Next, give yourself a time frame to talk to people in your industry whom you respect to get a sense of where your industry is heading and the relative prospects of working in different companies.

Networking

Networking now involves a more cautious management of conversations that focuses on the person you are conversing with more than your situation.

Ask: How are you doing? How is your company handling the current environment? Which companies do you think are best positioned to deal with the current situation? Who seems positioned to do well going forward? What work needs to get done in the short term?

Talk with two or three people more senior than you about their take on your industry and where and how your skills could be best utilised. Conversations with recognised mentors can help clarify your skills and strengths as well as help you ascertain where you fit best in the evolving market.

Small organisations

Some smaller companies are often looking to meet people who have left larger

companies. You will need to sound out these organisations to get a sense of their business model, leadership team and financials and to see if one of them could be the right company for you.

Few companies are recruiting in volume right now, but some are meeting with job seekers and hiring again. There are opportunities right now in IT, finance and operations — areas which need attention and people, no matter what is happening in the economy.

Career alternatives

Many individuals are considering exploring career alternatives. Career transitions work best when there is some transferability of skills. It is easier to change either function or industry, but not as easy to change both.

Transferable skills

Skills such as IT, human resources and accounting can be more readily transitioned between industries than skills that are based on a subject matter expertise within a particular industry.

Individuals with those industry-specific knowledge bases are best suited to transition to a different type of organisation within the broader industry category. People sometimes also use these times to enhance their skills by furthering their training or education and business school applications generally increase.

The basic job search

The following questions you should ask

and answer are based on the principles of a good job search and career management that apply at any stage in the economic cycle. They will help you to analyse your strengths and identify gaps in your skills set and knowledge that you need to fill.

- What are your key skills, assets and deliverables? Do you best express them on paper or when you meet people?
- Who do you know and who can you get to know, to give you insights and contacts in companies?
- What skills and knowledge will make you more marketable going forward? How do you best acquire those skills and knowledge in a specific amount of time?
- What are the needs of your industry going forward?
- What companies are best positioned to do well in the next year to two?

Article by David Wee, managing director of Lee Hecht Harrison, a global company that offers customised and fully integrated human capital solutions. For details, visit www.LHH.com.sg, call 6732-3123 or e-mail custcare@LHH.com

To send article contributions, comments, views and story ideas, e-mail recruit3@sph.com.sg

When you contribute to CATS Recruit in The Straits Times, we take it that you agree, at no charge, to allow us to use, archive, resell or reproduce the letters and contributions in any way and in any medium.



Work it!

■ PAGE RX BUILD RESOURCES

Do you have relevant experience in event or sales management? Kidney Dialysis Foundation is looking for suitable candidates to join its resource development and communications team.

■ PAGE RX DEVELOP BUSINESS

Crystal CG, the official graphics service provider for Beijing 2008 Olympics, is expanding regionally and looking for applicants to fill the positions of business development manager (new media), project coordinator and admin executive.

■ PAGE RX PROVIDE SUPPORT

United World College of South East Asia is looking for a secretary (exam office) to provide secretarial and administrative support to GCSE coordinators, and ensure smooth running of all aspects of the examination processes.

■ PAGE RX WORK WITH PATENTS

Calling holders of degrees in electrical or electronics engineering: Allen & Gledhill LLP, an award-winning law firm, is looking for a patent engineer to work in the Intellectual Property and Technology Department.

