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## Career Tips

**January 2013 - Volume 2013/1**

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Dear John,

Happy New Year, and welcome to my first issue for 2013! If you aren't already also receiving Dave Miller and my Influential Leadership series, I invite you to sign up at www.JHACareers.com/InfluentialLeadershipSignup.htm - each week you will receive a short article with strategies, insights and observations designed to help you both become and be recognized as an influential leader in your organization.

If you are a member of a professional organization that would like to hear from an expert on career, networking or job search topics, why not suggest they reach out to me? Here's a list of past presentations: www.JHACareers.com/Presentations.htm

And here's a fun fact I read in the January issue of United's Hemispheres magazine. Apparently a study at Wharton found that people consider men with shaved heads to be more dominant, confident and masculine, even if the hair was digitally removed in Photoshop. I was all set to break out my razor, until I read further - they also found that men with shared heads were thought to be considerably less attractive!

As always, send me your questions about your biggest frustrations with your own Career Search, or the greatest obstacles you face in your Career at Advice@JHACareers.com.

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## Are You Overusing Your Résumé?

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This might seem like an odd question, coming on the heels of my series on how to create a powerful résumé, so let me explain.

When I went through an executive outplacement program in the mid-90's, my career counselor and I worked hard to create a résumé that would market me well for the (successful) career change I intended to pursue. As soon as we were done, he said, *"Now, use it sparingly."*

Of course, my first reaction was disbelief. I was proud of my new 'sales brochure', and Seagate had just printed up a boxful of them. Then he explained that **I would always be the best sales piece for myself, and if I pushed the résumé on people, that**

would detract from my efforts.

I find that job seekers do tend to rely much too heavily on their résumés to sell them. They use the résumé to provide a pre-meeting introduction, hand it out to networking contacts and ask people to pass it on to hiring managers or HR departments.

Let me challenge you to ONLY present your résumé in these two circumstances:

- 1. When you are applying to a specific, posted job opportunity.**
- 2. When someone very specifically asks to see it.**

And even in situation #2, it's often better to resist the request, depending on the reason for it.

For example, if you are having a networking meeting with me, and I suggest you give me your résumé so that I can take it to HR, often the hidden subtext is one of these:

- This is an easy out for me, and I'm basically using this to bring the meeting to a close, looking like I've been helpful without really putting myself out in any meaningful way.
- Our company has an employee referral policy, and I want to make sure that should you happen to get considered for an opportunity, I get the fee.
- I'm naïve enough to think that taking your résumé to HR really is of significant benefit to you.

Obviously those aren't always the case. I may in fact be planning to take your résumé to the Director of HR or a hiring manager, along with my own strong, personal recommendation, and if so, that's great. However, my experience is that those are the case in only a small percentage of situations.

So, unless you get the sense it really is that last case, why not just resist a bit? You could respond along these lines:

"John, I really appreciate that. I do find that it's even more helpful to me to get a chance to talk to someone in person. Who do you think you could introduce me to?"

Here's another reason why pushing your résumé is generally not a productive activity. As soon as you present a résumé, the person receiving it is likely to go into evaluation mode. Instead of an open brainstorming discussion about what you are looking to do and why you would be great at that, the meeting is more of a direct

interview-type assessment.

The more 'open' brainstorming conversation tends to be more productive, and can lead to potential referrals or interviews in a more natural way, as the listener starts to get excited about what you have to offer and starts to think about how they might fit you into their organization or introduce you to a contact who would find you interesting.

I know the objection you are likely to have at this point. *"But if I can't use my résumé as my introduction, what will I use?"*

One possibility you might consider is to have a short (1/2 to 1 page) brief that highlights what you have to offer without all of the detail inherent in the résumé. That also can satisfy a primary marketing tenet - always leave them wanting to know more.

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### **Upcoming Events in NJ**

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What's Blocking Your Search?

7PM, Wednesday, January 23, GenY Networking Group
Library of the Chathams, 214 Main St, Chatham, NJ
For more info, email [Joseph J. Finazzo](mailto:Joseph.J.Finazzo)

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#### **Dear Career Tips (Management Consulting Interviews)**

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One of my clients reached out to me with a question. Her son had an offer for business analyst position with a well-known firm, but rejected this since he is determined to go into management consulting. **She asked if I know of a career coach who can help her son specifically for interviews for management consulting positions.** Honestly, I am not aware of anyone who is an expert SPECIFICALLY in interview prep for management consulting jobs. Of course, that does not mean that there is no such a thing. It just means that I am simply ignorant about this particular specialization. Can you please shed some light on this?

Dear Consulting WannaBe:

A colleague and I coached the partners (and, to a limited degree, most of the operation) of a major consulting operation for 3 years. I can also bring my perspective as having been a systems consultant for a number of years, and having hired and overseen actuarial consultants during my Actuarial career...

The best interview is all about digging deeply into the interviewer's challenges - really conducting a needs assessment. In the consulting world, a good needs assessment would also demonstrate how the candidate will do the same with clients and prospects, a critical business development skill.

Keep in mind that in any consulting or professional services firm, the person who is most valued is not the great technician or consultant, but the rainmaker. The more you can demonstrate that you are someone who can build deep relationships with clients and prospects, and convince the interviewer that having you on the team will lead to new clients and more business from existing clients, the more likely you will be hired. Even if that isn't the current, formal job, seeing that potential in the candidate will be a major differentiator.

Submit your own questions about issues you face in your search or your career, and I'll address them in a future issue (keeping you anonymous, of course, unless you specifically tell me to do otherwise). And you won't have to wait for the publication - I'll respond to you directly in the meanwhile.

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**Quick Links...**

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Keys to Selling Your Achievements at www.JHACareers.com/SYACourseNew.htm

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More About John Hadley at www.JHACareers.com/Principal.htm

Contact Information

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phone: 908-725-2437

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John Hadley Associates | 8 Lori Drive | Somerville | NJ | 08876