

# CareerSmart Advisor™

## Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

### A Note From Dave

If you left your leadership role tomorrow, do you know who would replace you in that position? Many leaders are guilty of not having a definitive answer to that question. Understandably, our thoughts are focused more on succession planning as it relates to our employees. Plus, many of us don't think we will ever want to leave our current posts.



Data from a recent survey from Robert Half Management Resources confirms that's the main reason why leaders don't have personal succession plans. Eighty-three percent of the financial executives who participated in the Robert Half survey said they hadn't picked anyone to succeed them. Nearly all of those executives (81 percent) said they had no successor because they didn't plan to vacate their jobs any time soon.

One of the true signs of leadership is knowing that you can be replaced, and ensuring that processes will continue to run smoothly if and when you move on. If you have the power to leave your organization in the best hands when you part ways, that's what you must do.

I encourage you to think more about how you would answer my opening question and put that personal succession plan in place before you really need it.

Most leaders are concerned about their "legacy." Not having someone in place to make such a critical transition is certainly not how I would want my legacy to start. Would you?

Sincerely,



Dave Opton  
ExecuNet Founder & CEO  
[www.execunet.com/davesblog](http://www.execunet.com/davesblog)

**PAGE 2** | Career-Enhancing Programs and Networking Meetings  
Expand your learning with expert-led presentations and locate ExecuNet meetings in your area. [[more](#)]

**PAGE 3** | Executive Presence  
A Q&A with author Harrison Monarth [[more](#)]

**PAGE 4** | How to Assess and Decline the First Job Offer  
**FEATURE ARTICLE**  
Learn how to determine if a job offer will meet your professional and personal goals and how to reject that offer gracefully if it's not the right fit. [[more](#)]

**PAGE 6** | Developing Team Building as a Key Leadership Skill  
Why taking the time to build the competencies necessary to manage teams should be an important component of an executive's leadership development strategy. [[more](#)]

**PAGE 7** | Consulting: A Proven Method of Finding Your Next Job Faster  
Discover how consulting assignments can position you for greater job search success, especially during challenging economic times. [[more](#)]

**PAGE 8** | What a Relocation Package Should Contain  
Peers share business and career insights in the ExecuNet Forum. [[more](#)]

**THE NUMBERS**

#### KEY EXECUTIVE MARKETPLACE INDICATORS

- 83%** | executive recruiters who say their client companies are more cautious about relocation
- 46%** | CEOs who claim their résumés are ready to send to a recruiter right now
- 18%** | search firms planning to add professional staff over next three months
- 16%** | increase in ExecuNet's executive job postings in April over March

# Career-Enhancing Programs

May/June 2010

Hosted by Dave Opton, founder and CEO, ExecuNet

**INCLUDED IN YOUR EXECUNET MEMBERSHIP**

**5/20 — The MarketOne Executive: Winning the High-Stakes Game of Landing a Top C-Level Role!**

Karen Armon

To get the extraordinary results you desire, you need an extraordinary approach that is designed exclusively for moving into the top leadership role. Learn the “musts” for executives like you who want to organize a well-designed campaign and find their next top job.

**6/4 — Finding Executive Jobs in the Current Recession: Traditional Methods Don't Work**

Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane

Learn why conventional approaches to the job search don't work and how eight proven techniques can quickly lead you to your next job opportunity.

**5/21 — Six-Figure Hotline**

Dave Opton

Join Dave Opton, CEO and founder of ExecuNet, for an interactive discussion about executive career issues that are important to you.

**6/24 — How the Job Search Game Has Changed**

Bobbie LaPorte

Hear real-world experiences about successful job searches and the techniques, tips and resources that can help you create similar results in your own quest for a new position.

**6/3 — Private Equity 101: Exploring Career Options Within P.E. Firms**

Mike Lorelli

Rewarding career opportunities exist within private equity firms. Learn how to position yourself as a private equity portfolio company executive.

**MOJO with Marshall Goldsmith  
Now Available On Demand**

Join author Marshall Goldsmith as he uncovers the four keys to finding your MOJO and how you can use it to gain a competitive edge in your business and career.

# Networking Meetings in Your Area

May/June 2010

Hosted by ExecuNet Facilitators

5/17 — **Detroit** — Mark Cory

5/17 — **Boston Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Marg Balcom

5/18 — **Lexington** — Thom Crimans & Cathy Fyock

5/18 — **Wilmington** — Rick Hays

5/18 — **Irvine (Orange County)** — Mark James

5/18 — **Seattle** — Susan Stringer

5/18 — **Cleveland** — Rick Taylor

5/19 — **Chicago** — Gail Sussman Miller

5/19 — **Toronto Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Martin Buckland

5/19 — **Charlotte** — Merton Marsh & Michael Hall

5/19 — **Raleigh/Durham** — Stuart Levine

5/20 — **Palo Alto** — Bobbie LaPorte

5/20 — **Milwaukee-Northern Illinois** — Paul Bors

5/20 — **Indianapolis** — Romona Camarata

5/20 — **Minneapolis** — John Wetzels & Barbara Adams

5/20 — **Louisville** — Thom Crimans & Cathy Fyock

5/20 — **Pittsburgh/Cranberry Township** — Tina Winner

5/20 — **Houston** — Yolanda Brown

5/21 — **White Plains** — Linsey Levine

5/21 — **Detroit Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Ruthann Liagre

5/25 — **Vienna/Tysons Corner, VA Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Peter McCarthy

5/26 — **Stamford Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Linda Van Valkenburgh

5/26 — **Toronto** — Martin Buckland

5/26 — **Denver** — Karen Armon

5/27 — **Atlanta Sr. Executive Roundtable** — J. Patrick Haly

5/27 — **Dallas** — Bob Hueglin

5/27 — **Columbus** — Janine Moon

5/28 — **St. Louis** — Ken Coleman & Randy Hove

5/28 — **Rochester/Finger Lakes** — Arnie Boldt & Gail Smith Boldt

6/1 — **San Diego/Carsbad** — Mark James

6/1 — **Ft. Lauderdale** — Jeannette Kraar

6/1 — **Miami** — Jeannette Kraar

6/2 — **New York City** — Judy Rosemarin

6/2 — **Chicago** — Gail Sussman Miller

6/2 — **Philadelphia** — Mitch Wienick & Ed Kelleher

6/2 — **Boulder/Superior/Louisville** — Karen Armon

6/2 — **Cincinnati** — Jennifer McClure

6/2 — **New York City Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Judy Rosemarin

6/2 — **Philadelphia Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Mitch Wienick & Ed Kelleher

Reserve your space! Call Member Services at 800-637-3126 or visit [ExecuNet.com](http://ExecuNet.com)

# Books Worth Your Time: Q&A with Author Harrison Monarth

## Executive Presence

**H**aving the experience, education and skill set to be a CEO is not all it takes to get to the top, nor do these attributes result in success. What the top CEOs have are leadership communication skills that cause others, both inside and outside the organization, to buy-in to a shared vision. *New York Times* bestselling author Harrison Monarth calls this mastery of communication skills *Executive Presence: The Art of Commanding Respect Like a CEO* [McGraw Hill, 2009].

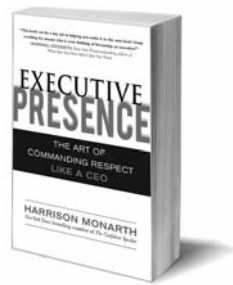
Monarth believes a successful CEO can accurately read people and predict their behavior and use that insight to influence perceptions and bring opponents to his way of thinking. The author also shows how to identify who is listening and how to craft an audience-specific message so they can connect and buy-in to the vision. In addition, the CEO with executive presence can effectively maintain a personal brand, oversee his online reputation and effectively manage crises.

In the exclusive ExecuNet interview, ExecuNet Editor Will Flammé asks the author to discuss his views on creating memorable presentations.

### **Q. How do you define executive presence and why is having it important for professionals?**

**A.** Executive presence is often the missing ingredient in the professional arsenals of many otherwise smart, educated, driven and even connected people. My definition of executive presence comprises the specific behaviors and communication strategies that separate those with leadership potential from the masses, and positions them to become successful leaders who others want to follow. It's a high-impact professional attribute, founded on a critical skill set necessary for anyone looking to reach the pinnacle of their career, profession or business.

Every year, business schools and other graduate programs release tens of thousands of highly intelligent and ambitious young people into a complex high-pressure world where a stellar education, intelligence



and drive are merely the ticket to admission. But in the never-ending competition for the top jobs, the top positions and the type of responsibility that gains a person the respect and confidence of peers and bosses, you need more than that. You need the perception management, influential communication and personal branding skills, and strategies that unfortunately aren't taught in the curricula of today's business schools.

### **Q. What suggestions do you have for using the media to enhance one's professional image?**

**A.** One of the keys in successfully promoting one's personal brand through the media is knowing how to communicate in pithy sound-bites. Those are the compelling quotes and clear messages that cut through the noise and stand out.

Another key is mastering the art of responding to difficult questions during interviews to maximize the perception of credibility. Professionals should keep in mind that the media is not interested in promoting them. The media is interested in the back-story and the answers people would rather not give. Therefore, anticipating and being prepared to answer difficult questions is critical to protect one's reputation and credibility and enhance one's professional image via the media.

### **Q. How does an executive develop himself into a compelling brand?**

**A.** It's important to remember that everything about us communicates a message to a watching, listening, judging public. And from our grooming and style to our content and delivery and of course our behavior, our actions, we tell the world

who we really are, whether we like it or not. That's why paying attention to all of the communication signals we're sending is critical as we craft a powerful personal brand that is consistent and elicits positive emotions and valuations.

Self-awareness — knowing the impact of how you come across is critical. Everything else is based on this. From ethically engineering buy-in and gaining compliance to learning how to change attitudes and behaviors to managing interpersonal conflict and always seeking to improve relationships. And, of course, the awareness that personal branding is not a choice anymore but a requisite for a successful career.

### **Q. How does an executive with executive presence motivate his employees?**

**A.** Executives with executive presence are adept at creating buy-in — often easier to define than achieve, which can be viewed as an alignment of the thoughts and beliefs of a target demographic with yours as the managing or accountable entity. It is a process of working together with people, rather than dictating to them...in a manner that leads toward their understanding of the goal and its strategic importance to achieve a win-win, all within a common system of values. It is gaining their personal commitment toward a goal, as opposed to a fear of failure, and, therefore, a willingness to undertake and accomplish the necessary tasks and roles. The more complex and significant the project or organizational objective, the more buy-in becomes an essential component of the strategy to achieve it. Such a definition shifts the role of a manager from one of task-definer and taskmaster to one of task-empowerer. Because any executive's first line of managerial offense — and indeed, most powerful strategy — is to strive to create a level of buy-in that will accelerate success, rather than using compliance and dictatorial power as a doomed and ultimately inefficient means of getting the work done. ■

# How to Assess and Decline the First Job Offer

By Marji McClure

Despite high unemployment and an economy that has not fully stabilized, executives apparently aren't feeling rushed to accept the first job offer they receive.

Ninety-one percent of the senior leaders surveyed in ExecuNet's recently released 18th annual *Executive Job Market Intelligence Report* (EJMIR), said they wouldn't accept, or would not necessarily accept, the first offer they received from any company. Even finance professionals, who saw their industry one of the hardest hit during the recession, don't appear anxious or desperate to accept that very first offer — just nine percent of them said they would take the job.

Reasons why executives turn down the first offer vary, but the top determining factor is usually salary, according to both executive and corporate recruiters.

## Determining if “Yes” or “No” is the Right Answer

Executives should determine all of their own personal deal-breakers (those that don't necessarily involve others, such as a boss or a spouse) before they even begin a job search. Well before considering any offer, executives must have a clear sense of what they want from any position they will take. They need to know what types of skills they want to use, what type of company and/or industry would complement their knowledge and expertise, and they need to understand what would be the best fit for both their professional and personal lives.

“Executives must first be clear about their career goals and mature about compromises they are willing and able to make vs. deal-breakers,” says Debra Feldman, a Connecticut-based executive talent agent who represents candidates during the job search process. “They need to have some standards on which to objectively evaluate all potential offers, a hierarchical ranking of ‘must haves,’ ‘want

to haves’ and ‘won't accept.’ Know your limits before you start the process.”

One area which executives need to assess is work/life balance, advises Marg Balcom, principal of Massachusetts-based MBM Career Management Services and the facilitator for ExecuNet's networking meetings in the Boston area. Balcom says this should include an analysis of the commute, if after hours “face time” is part of the culture, if there are appropriate daycare options, and if more flexibility is worth a difference in salary.

Bobbie LaPorte, founder and principal of RAL & Associates, a California-based leadership, career development and consulting firm and an ExecuNet meeting facilitator in Palo Alto, suggests creating a list of “ideal job preferences” when determining the criteria for a role an executive would accept. “It's important early on in the career transition process to be clear on your criteria for a new role, not just functional responsibility but also values/culture of the organization, how decisions are made; your boss's management style; how much freedom and autonomy will you have in the role; compensation, geographic location and the platform for the next role,” says LaPorte.

## When It's Not a Fit, Bowing Out Gracefully

As they examine all aspects of a new position, from job responsibilities to the benefits and perks, executives should eliminate themselves from the running as soon as they feel a job isn't the right fit for them. Even if there has not been an official offer yet, it's acceptable to tell

potential employers and/or recruiters you would like to discontinue the interview process, experts stress.

“Don't take it to the end and turn it down,” says Paula Weiner, president of New York-based executive search firm Weiner & Associates, and provide a specific reason why you reached such a decision, she adds. If you continue through the process only to decline the offer, it sometimes gives the perception you used the company to improve your stature with your current employer, Weiner says.

When informing hiring managers and recruiters you want to decline a job offer, don't let them know via email, says Rebecca Bamman, vice president of retail/wholesale division for Florida-based answerQUEST Executive Search. She says it's important to communicate your message over the phone or in-person. It needs to be a “live” conversation.

Bamman says it's appropriate to follow up with a turn-down letter, in which you thank the hiring manager for his time, offer a compliment (such as you are impressed with their operational efficiencies) and then reiterate your previous conversation (either in phone or in person) when you explained that the position didn't match your skills, or whatever the deal-breaker was. Also, ask the hiring manager to keep you in mind for future positions. Bamman says that sometimes those managers will call that candidate back for a different position. And that HR professional or hiring manager might change jobs and find you are a viable

**Continued on page 5**

## Reasons Executives Decline Offers, According to Companies

1. Total compensation isn't high enough
2. Relocation not financially viable
3. Accepted an offer from another organization
4. Spouse/partner/family becomes uncomfortable with relocating
5. Job responsibilities (tied)
5. Personality of future boss (tied)

Source: ExecuNet's 2010 *Executive Job Market Intelligence Report*

## First Job Offer

*Continued from page 4*

candidate for their new company, or they could possibly recommend you to a friend who seeks a candidate with your skill set.

Become a problem-solver in a slightly different way for both recruiters and hiring managers. Identify another viable candidate for the role. Refer a friend or colleague who you feel would be an ideal fit. That way, the position still gets filled, and the recruiter and hiring manager may be more apt to want to work with you again. They will likely appreciate the fact that you were still able to help them fill their open position with a qualified candidate.

### You Never Know

It's especially important to explain your reasons for rejecting a position. It could, in some cases, turn a "no" into a "yes." "You want to be as honest as possible. Tell them what you're thinking," says Bamman. Hiring managers and recruiters need to know why you don't want to accept the job. "Maybe the position wasn't right, but maybe they can change it to make it right," adds Bamman.

One ExecuNet member says he turned down an offer after the company wanted him to begin the new role as soon as possible. It would have meant losing a bonus with his previous company. The new company initially refused to accept a later start date, but reconsidered later that day. "I did accept the offer and joined the new company — according to my schedule," he says. "I had done a thorough evaluation of what I wanted in a company and an offer, and was willing to stick to what I wanted. This is probably a good thing for all to do when job searching or looking for a change, because many times the emotional momentum of the chase and negotiation could lead you to sacrifice something you otherwise might have strong feelings about."

### Maintaining Relationships After Declining

Balcom says candidates should really focus on building relationships and networking throughout the entire job search process — this should be a strong

### Expert Resources:

- Marg Balcom, MBM Career Management Services ([MBMCareerServices.com](http://MBMCareerServices.com))
- Rebecca Bamman, answerQUEST Executive Search ([answerQUEST.net](http://answerQUEST.net))
- Debra Feldman ([JobWhiz.com](http://JobWhiz.com))
- Bobbie LaPorte, RAL & Associates ([BobbieLaPorte.com](http://BobbieLaPorte.com))
- Paula Weiner, Weiner & Associates Inc. ([BuildWinTeam.com](http://BuildWinTeam.com))

objective from the very beginning of the quest for a new position. "Bond with all interviewers and pick out one or two you find a connection with — discover who you know in common," says Balcom. "Tell them with the thank you note that you would like to stay in touch regardless of how the search works out — and do."

"Volunteer information and assistance. Be generous," Feldman adds. "Often, this is only possible if the relationship is already a good one; people trust each other; you have helped each other and have been generous right from the get-go."

Bamman notes that your actions regarding a rejected offer could have long-lasting effects and could possibly impact your success in landing other positions in the future. "Someone in HR [for the hiring company] might work for ABC Company today and might work for other companies tomorrow. You could be burning bridges with multiple companies," says Bamman. "Some companies won't consider a candidate because of something they did to another company or person." Bamman says she has worked with candidates who have shown unprofessional behavior and she chooses not to work with those individuals on future opportunities.

### The Future — and its Opportunities

While the situation can be difficult and uncomfortable, being open, honest and professional is, of course, the best way to conduct yourself if you are declining a job offer. "I think just the fact that the executive is being honest about their interest (or lack of) in the role shows regard and consideration for the company and their hiring process and is a positive reflection on them and their credibility," says LaPorte. "If they handle it correctly, they can show appreciation for being considered while leaving the door open to maintain a business relationship in the future."

The main objective, obviously, is for

an executive to land in a position that is truly the right fit for her skills and expertise. "You want to make a positive career move, not a desperate move," says Weiner. Executives shouldn't compromise on that.

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The fact is executives want to find a position they can grow with as the economy rebounds, one that will further develop their careers as they help their new organization prosper during the economic recovery. Bamman says she sees executives being cautious these days since they don't want to find themselves in a situation where they have made the wrong decision about accepting a position and are back in the job market again. "They don't want to be a job hopper since that doesn't look good on your résumé," she says.

Staying true to yourself and your end goals, while maintaining your best business behavior will help you eventually land the role you really seek as well as build and foster relationships with hiring managers and recruiters who can serve as allies along the way. "Regardless of whether you are working directly with the company's HR executive/hiring manager or through a recruiter, if you are professional, maintain your value system and provide honesty in your feedback, you can look yourself in the mirror and rest well," says an ExecuNet member. ■

## Insider Insight

# Developing Team Building as a Key Leadership Skill

By Maureen Metcalf

**F**or leaders considering where to invest your leadership development time and resources, building the skills necessary to lead and work on teams is critical in the current business climate. As leaders, we accomplish much of our work in conjunction with teams, many consisting of people who do not report to us, so our ability to influence becomes critical to our success. By increasing our team effectiveness, we leverage what we can produce by enlisting the work of the team to deliver results against our collective goals.

With all the leadership courses available, I am reminded of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, which begins with Tom's famous whitewashing scheme in which he convinces his friends that the chore of painting a fence is fun. While it seems so basic, it provides us an example of how leaders and teams work together effectively to accomplish a task and create benefit for all involved.

### Teamwork Can Define Careers

A key differentiator for professional growth is how well you work with others on teams. We can all think of times when we could have accomplished a task easier alone, but still needed to work with others to gain buy-in. This is particularly true of senior leaders when developing organizational strategy that must be implemented by the broader organization to be successful.

There are also significant benefits to the team when they have a strong leader present. They not only accomplish the task more effectively, they also learn by example how the leader thinks about the business, as well as the opportunity at hand. They also see how the leader works with others. This team activity establishes and/or reinforces the culture. People see if the leader's behavior is consistent with the organization's stated values and beliefs.

I worked with a client who saw

himself as the expert at everything he did. He was frustrated by working with teams because it got in the way of doing the real work, and no one knew as much as he did. This team aspect slowed the work down and frustrated him. He also thought he should be promoted because he could certainly accomplish the work more effectively than anyone around him, and he was forced to work for leaders who were not as competent as he was. He believed management had all kinds of requests and changed their minds regularly; they could not pick a path and stick to it.

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He was great at setting direction for others, but his primary tool for gaining acceptance of his direction was intimidation. He happened to be the president of a business unit, so this worked for him short-term. But the turnover he caused had a serious and negative impact on the company overall. He was not moving the business forward, and others disliked working with him. He remembered when he liked going to work, but that time had long passed. He was frustrated and unhappy and did not know where to turn to fix things other than find a “better” company with “smarter colleagues” to work with. What he missed was that *he* was the problem. He would not likely find a company where he could show poor personal skills and be surrounded by great leaders who saw every situation the same way he did.

### Keys to Team Participation

There are six key components that impact our ability to work with others effectively.

These skills can be learned and practiced.

- *Self awareness* — I know my strengths, weaknesses, drives, values and impact on others. I know when to ask for help.
- *Self management* — I manage how I behave, considering how it will impact others. I act professionally even when frustrated.
- *Motivation* — I do what is required even if it will not be an immediate benefit to me.
- *Empathy* — I understand others have emotions, and I try to respond to what they need to be successful.
- *Social skills* — I am building rapport with others to move the project forward to accomplish its goals.
- *Communication* — I share information in a transparent and respectful manner and address conflict quickly and skillfully.

After developing solid technical skills, we are measured on our ability to accomplish tasks with and through others. Technical skills become “table stakes;” everyone has them, and they are no longer the differentiator for business success.

Our education often stops with learning the technical aspects of the job and omits how to work well with others. Some call these soft skills and discount them because they are “touchy feely.” Research indicates that one must be technically competent and also interpersonally competent to advance in a leadership role.

Take a moment to ask yourself how you relate to others. Are you working on a team that is not as effective as you would like? What are you doing to contribute to the dysfunction? What can you do to improve? ■

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*Maureen Metcalf is the founder of Metcalf and Associates, a firm focused on creating strategic value through Level 5 Leaders. She can be reached at 614-262-3787 or [Metcalf-Associates.com](http://Metcalf-Associates.com)*

## Your Career Advisor

# Consulting: A Proven Method to Finding Your Next Job Faster

By Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane

As the deep recession persists, finding a good full-time executive level job continues to be a daunting challenge as qualified senior executives often take a year or more to land. You may be one of many who have been told, "You'd be perfect for our company, but we are not hiring until the economy rebounds." Our advice is, if you are that good, but companies aren't willing to hire you full-time, offer to work for them part-time. Or to put it another way, if the front door is closed, try the side door. Unfortunately, most executive job seekers today only consider consulting as a way to obtain income after a lengthy and unsuccessful search. For the following reasons, especially during this difficult job market, we recommend seeking consulting assignments early during the job search process.

### More Consulting Opportunities During a Recession

Hiring part-time employees, especially at the senior level, is a classic strategy companies use during down economies to fix pressing problems at a lower cost. This recession is no different, as *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* have recently documented large increases in part-time hiring nationwide. Companies can thus avoid long-term agreements that require social security, health benefits, severance, etc. The best way to obtain

these assignments is by networking through contacts in your target industries.

### Strengthens Your Résumé

Executives in transition can enhance their credibility and market worth by updating their career history to include consulting assignments and achievements. Including substantive consulting achievements on your résumé helps answer the often asked question, "What have you been doing since you left ABC Inc.?" It confirms that your skills and experience continue to be in demand and are highly valued. This gives you an edge over others in transition who have no accomplishments to cite during months out of work. When asked why you chose to consult, the best answer is to say that the market chose you (companies that knew of and respected your abilities approached you to help them after learning that you had left your former employer).

### Income

Clearly, consulting income helps pay the bills, especially if there has been no severance or it has run out. During a time of great stress, income reduces financial pressure, strengthens confidence and self-esteem, and offers needed encouragement that companies still need you and are willing to pay you what you believe you are worth. The rule of thumb is to charge double your previous annual compensation on a retainer basis to compensate for lack of social security (you now have to

pay double), health benefits, marketing expenses and overhead/office expenses.

### Often Leads to a Full-Time Job

Experts in the interim management field have told us that approximately 40 percent of the part-time consultants they represent are offered and accept full-time jobs. This is because they work closely with the companies, impress them with their work ethic and skills, and become comfortable with their cultures and challenges. Accordingly, consulting can become an important part-time bridge to a full-time engagement.

### Facilitates Transfer to a New Industry

If the job you left is in a declining industry that is consolidating and no longer hiring, you should probably change sectors to one where there is a growing need for your skills and experience. Choose the one of greatest interest, and then talk to executives who have successfully transferred there from your industry, and ask them how they accomplished it. Such a move is often difficult without prior work experience in the new space. Consulting provides you with the opportunity to gain new sector experience and thus get hired more easily in a different sector. Once you have completed a successful assignment, you are in a far stronger position to get hired full-time with the company, or if not, with another in the field. ■

### Finding Executive Jobs in the Current Recession: Traditional Methods Don't Work

Presented by Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane on Friday, June 4, 2010, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

For many executives, their job search is taking longer than expected. In the current economy, it may take a year or more for executive job seekers to land their new position unless they adapt their search strategies to changing market conditions. Join executive career coaches Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane for this new program to learn:

- Why conventional approaches are no longer effective
- Eight proven techniques to find your next job faster
- How to change industries if yours isn't hiring
- How consulting can lead to a full-time job

*Co-founded by Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane, OptiMarket LLC is an executive counseling service, working exclusively with both currently employed and in-transition senior level executive clients whose compensation is \$200K and above. Executives are guided through the search process with continuous, two-on-one, marketing driven coaching by successful operating executives with more than 15 years of counseling experience. Mays and Sloane can be contacted at 203-921-0322 or [OptiMarketLLC.com](http://OptiMarketLLC.com)*

## From the Forums

# What a Relocation Package Should Contain

*ExecuNet's Forum is the online community area where members can meet and help one another network their way into their next assignment or share information and experiences. [Access the Forum under "Make Connections" on the ExecuNet member homepage.] In this excerpt from a recent Forum conversation, the question about the contents of a relocation package is discussed. [Some content has been edited.]*

**ExecuNet meeting facilitator Romona Camarata:** If one would take a position and want to negotiate a relocation package, what would be a fair combination to offer? Buy your house; have the company hire an agent to sell your house (then after three months, the real estate company buys the house); get a condo from the company? All of the above?

**ExecuNet member BobB:** It all depends upon the position on which you are being considered. More and more companies are shying away, if possible, from the big relocations. That said, if you are interviewing for a CEO or COO position, much can be had. I have moved seven times in my career and have been lucky in all my moves because I either was being transferred, or I was recruited to a much needed position within the company.

In all my relocations, I was paid for everything from packing, moving, temporary housing, travel home, closing costs, etc. These moves were for C-level positions and companies that had strong needs for what I do.

**ExecuNet member Peter Ciekurs:** My relocation experiences go back a number of years. My first relocation was "painless" and included the home buyout, temporary living for three months, and full reimbursement of all moving expenses. This was a department manager position within a division of a large conglomerate. The move was from New Jersey to Connecticut almost 20 years ago.

The second was as a VP with a small private company, where I was reimbursed the physical move, including packing and three months of temporary living. No home buyout, luckily my house sold quickly. This move was from Connecticut to Kentucky 13 years ago.

**ExecuNet member Brian Fisher:** It may also depend heavily on the size of the company. When my company moved me two years ago from Florida to Dallas, they paid for all moving costs and my temporary housing for six weeks when I got here. They also paid for a family house hunting trip. But they did not buy my previous home or offer to help on closing costs here. The company is small- to

mid-size, even though I have a C-level position. So factor the size of the corporation into your negotiation.

**ExecuNet meeting facilitator Romona Camarata:** Brian F: Would you have negotiated the sale of your home, if you thought of it coming in the door as the new executive? How long do you think a company should pay for your temporary housing...if you are having trouble selling your home and you (or the market) prevents you from finding the right home?

**ExecuNet member Brian Fisher:** It wasn't that I didn't think of the company handling a real estate transaction in part or in whole for us; certain things came out in the negotiation process that they could or couldn't do. Buying a house was one of the things they couldn't do.

For small- to mid-sized companies, it seems pretty rare that they can buy a house for an employee no matter what level. I wouldn't expect it. I think only larger companies have the cash flow and funds to be able to do packages of that size. Even working with relocation companies can be pretty expensive.

The company paid for six weeks housing because I was working here without my family for that long. They would have paid it longer if I had needed it. ■

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**Founder & CEO:** David Opton

**Executive Editor:** Lauryn Franzoni

**Editor-in-Chief:** Robyn Greenspan

**Editor:** Marji McClure

**Online Editor:** Will Flammé

**Copy Editor:** Carol Hamilton

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ExecuNet

295 Westport Avenue

Norwalk, CT 06851

Phone: (800) 637-3126

Email: [info@execunet.com](mailto:info@execunet.com)

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