



CALIFORNIA PEOPLE SEARCH

Design and Champion Your Career Road Map by Lynn Taylor

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“If you aim at nothing, you’ll hit every time,” are the words of an anonymous sage. But the phrase has special meaning for career minded professionals, specifically those looking for new opportunities.

With the new year underway, you may have already turned inertia into inspiration. Perhaps you’ve made that agonizing but liberating decision to move on to greener pastures. That new calendar works wonders in helping you realize the power you possess to start fresh and take control of your career life!

Now the challenge: you realize what you didn’t like before, but what exactly are you looking for now? Many job seekers can state with certainty their desired job title and compensation, but it takes discipline and commitment to state the nuances that truly separate a good job offer from a great one.

One of the best ways to design your career road map is to start with the broadest career objectives, looking out five to 10 years. Think about what would bring you the simplest and greatest long term joy in your career life. You can get as granular as you wish. Then determine what kind of position is the most logical step toward that long range plan.

For example, do you eventually envision yourself running a division or managing a large group of people? Working fewer hours with more leisure time? Building a company, long lasting friendships or great technical skills? Do you have a monetary goal in mind over time? What are your long term career priorities?

By conducting this exercise, you may actually see a shift in your initial, ideal job description. You’ll be invigorated to champion your new, well designed

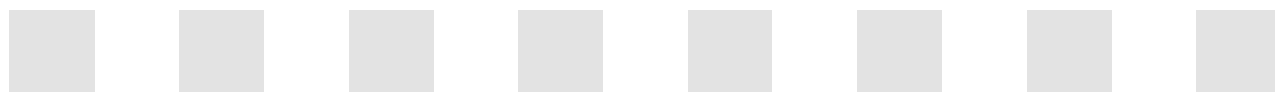
career course –with purpose. Here are a few tips to help you follow your career road map during the job search process. Your recruiter can help guide you in this process:

1.) Analyze *why* your past favorite projects appealed to you. Was it the recognition, varied nature of the skills required, or an underutilized ability finally deployed? Perhaps you have an untapped entrepreneurial or creative flair. Try to determine if a new job opportunity holds promise in those areas of strength or interest.

2.) If corporate culture weighs heavily in your satisfaction level, keep that as a priority. As you interview for positions, see if the firm’s team or individual approach matches yours; inquire about the pace; and ask lots of questions of peers, who are generally most candid about the work environment. (Continued on Page 2)

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- Email us at: becki@capepeoplesearch.com
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Design and Champion Your Career Road Map (Continued)



3.) Try to avoid the temptation of focusing solely on that tantalizing, prestigious title, salary or bonus to the exclusion of everything else when reviewing job listings. During interviews, ascertain as much as you can about the people with whom you'll be spending most of your week – and what a typical day at your new job looks like. Ask hypothetical, open-ended questions that relate directly to the position, such as how you would best achieve results on a specific project. This sleuthing will help you decide if "the fit" aligns with your road map.

4.) Weigh the importance of interpersonal criteria with skill components. How important is it, for example, that your boss has a good sense of humor, strong listening skills, or appears to be a solid mentor? Or, are you less concerned about such issues and more focused on building your technical or management skills? If so, can your employer offer this training?

5.) Your career journey could take you "off road" into unexpected, but exciting territory – and that may be your evolution of growth. But if you design and champion your road map based on a long term

target, an analysis of prior achievements and your true passions, you will be on the path to great career success.

©2008 Lynn Taylor. Ms. Taylor is the founder of Lynn Taylor Consulting, which advises employees and employers on workplace issues. She is an author, speaker and workplace research analyst, who has launched and developed several For Dummies... books on careers and hiring. If you have any questions for Lynn, please submit them to: gina@capeoplesearch.com.

"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."
~ **Milton Berle**

3 Tips for a Stellar Review

Whether your company conducts interviews annually or more frequently, and whether the purpose is to evaluate performance, salary or both, the following tips can help you ace your next review!

Prepare year 'round

Keep a running list of your accomplishments. Whether you saved the company \$50,000.00 or a client sent an email praising your work, add it to your 'review arsenal'. Likewise, be sure to give yourself plenty of time to prepare any documentation needed prior to the review and hand it in with plenty of time for the reviewer to give it adequate consideration.

Don't be shy about your accomplishments

It's hard for many of us to toot our own horns but if ever there was a time to do it, this is it! You may even consider asking if you could start your review by highlighting the achievement you are most proud of this year. It starts the interview off on a positive note and spotlights you at your best.

Accept positive and negative feedback graciously

Whether true or not, these are your manager or management team's perceptions. Hard as it might be, try not to lose your cool and remain

professional. Consider using phrases like, "I can see your point. In the future, I will handle the situation in the following manner..." or defer to them for a proposed suggestion. Likewise, if you are having difficulties and need additional resources to improve your performance, this would be the perfect time to ask! If there were issues you know will be brought up during the review, be sure to have solutions ready such as a plan for taking a course, finding a mentor, etc.

WRITING STAND-OUT THANK YOU LETTERS

When the interview is over, you have an opportunity to continue to make a great impression by sending a thank you letter. Let's face it; you're probably not the only candidate under consideration for an open position.

A thank you note is a great way to differentiate yourself from other candidates by showing not only your gratitude for the employer's time but your interest in the position.

Take advantage of the tips below to craft a strategic thank you letter:

Be sure to thank the employer for their time in telling you about the position and recap any points from the interview that demonstrate what makes you a good fit for the position.

Reiterate your skills and accomplishments and how they correlate directly to the company's current needs.

If you find yourself wishing you'd said something during the interview, the thank you letter is the perfect place to discuss any unmentioned points.

If you felt a rapport during your meeting, recap a part of your interview where you and the interview agreed on job-related issues including any suggestions you might have for addressing current issues. It's a great way to show you are invested in the company's success before

you've even been hired.

Lastly, the convenience of email makes it easy to send off a quick one or two liner to the hiring manager or team you interviewed with, but consider a hand-written card. Not only is it more personal, but it shows an extra degree of effort and interest.

10 Job Search and Interview Tips by Rebecca Kieler

1. Customize your résumé and cover letter

Tailor your résumé and cover letter to each open position to clearly demonstrate how your experience fills the employers' needs and requirements.

2. Diversify your search

80% of all jobs are never advertised and better than 50% of all employees get their jobs through networking. If you've been posting your résumé online, talk to your friends and attend an industry trade show.

3. Networking/Relationship building

Your friends, family and former co-workers each have a network of their own -- and a friend-of-a-friend might hold the perfect lead. Don't keep yourself a secret: Reach out to your network and let your contacts know what you are looking

for.

4. Make sure you are focused and clear about what you are looking for

If you are not clear you will come across as unprofessional and worst of all, desperate.

5. Keep a support network

Experts estimate the average job search to last anywhere between three and 10 months -- and that means a lot of rejection. To keep up your motivation be support and have a strong support network. Know that the right job is out there for you, waiting for you to find it.

6. Always be prepared

You can never be too prepared for your first meeting with a potential employer. Before your interview, always study the company's Web site and find people who have do or have worked there. Find out as much as you can about the

company's products, leadership, mission and culture, and prepare answers to common interview questions.

7. Be on time

Whether it's an informational interview, an open house or a formal interview, always arrive about 10 minutes early. Allow plenty of time for traffic and poor weather.

8. Dress and act the part

In a business setting, always dress in professional clothing in the best quality you can afford. Take the industry and employer into consideration, but a business suit is almost always appropriate for interviews. You can always ask what is appropriate to wear or go sit in the parking lot at 5 p.m. and see what other employees are wearing!

9. Listen more than you talk

Even if you're nervous at an interview, try not to ramble. By keeping quiet, you can learn valuable information about the company and avoid saying something that you'll wish you hadn't.

10. Ask good questions

Have a list of questions prepared that showcase your company research and interest in the position. Show how your previous experience meets the needs of the interviewer. These questions do not need to wait until the end of the interview, but always save a couple just for the end.

If you have a question for Rebecca for our next issue, or would like a free 30-minute career consultation, please contact:
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WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT WORKING WITH CALIFORNIA PEOPLE SEARCH

"Puja was so helpful in finding me a job that I liked. Even after getting the job, she checked up on me periodically. Also super personable."

~ *Stephanie Young, Candidate placed at Jafco Ventures*

"It's really a pleasure to work with someone who goes above and beyond their duties as Gina has done."

~ *Anna Yam, Candidate*

"Gina- Thank you again for letting me know about the position. I love the difference that you and everyone at California People Search makes. The speed at which you work, and the synergy that everyone in your office creates is unbeatable. It's no wonder that within hours of me posting my resume, I got a call about a position."

~ *Krupa Patel, Candidate*

"Puja is thorough and precise in her presentation of possible candidates to us. She works very hard to bring us candidates with the attributes that we are looking for. She is flexible, easy to work with, and patient. Bottom line is that Puja is a professional in every sense of the word; and a joy to work with as well. When given an assignment, you can rest easy knowing Puja is on it."

~ *Mary Shepherd, Client, Dinah's Court Hotel*

"Goals are dreams with deadlines."
~ **Diana Scharf Hunt**

