

CareerSmart Advisor™

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

A Note From Dave

Communication is an area in which companies — leaders and employees — can sometimes struggle. Not surprisingly, Web 2.0 technology is helping to bridge the gap, and many companies are using these solutions to create a more cohesive culture.



According to Watson Wyatt's recently released *2009 HR Technology Trends Survey*, more companies integrated social networking tools, blogs, videos and podcasts into their internal communications strategies as the economy slowed. The survey revealed that 72 percent of companies are using their intranet more, and 61 percent are relying more on email to keep the lines of communication open.

Usage has also increased in some of the more innovative methods, such as webcasts and blogs. Interestingly, role-based employee portals (which are personalized to each user) are gaining in popularity — 41 percent of survey respondents already have them, and 24 percent plan to have them in place within the next two years. Companies also plan to add blogs, wikis and podcasts during that time.

While some may have previously viewed Web 2.0 technology and its tools as distracting to employees, many organizations certainly realize that these latest advances have many more benefits than challenges. They foster a collaborative environment in which employees can be more productive, and job satisfaction can only improve if employees know they are being heard — and can easily hear from their leaders. If you and your company have embraced these tools, chances are you've clearly witnessed the results already.

Sincerely,

Dave

Dave Opton
ExecuNet Founder & CEO
www.execunet.com/davesblog

Creating a Healthy Future in Healthcare

By Marji McClure

When examining the viability of industries in which to transition a career, executives typically look to those sectors offering the least amount of volatility. One recession-proof industry is healthcare. Regardless of the economic climate and people's personal financial plans, healthcare is always a necessity.

Yet, is it a necessity for executives seeking a stable career to turn to the healthcare industry for their next job opportunity? The reasons for taking a closer look at the healthcare industry as an employment option appear rather compelling. First, \$59 billion of the US government's \$787 billion stimulus plan is earmarked for healthcare. Second, President Barack Obama has a goal that everyone in the US will have an electronic health record by 2014.

ExecuNet's *2009 Executive Job Market Intelligence Report* identified healthcare as the top growth industry every year since 2004 (expect in 2006 when it was the third top industry, displaced that year by financial services/banking/insurance). According to the most recent data available from the US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), healthcare is expected to generate three million new wage and salary jobs between 2006 and 2016, which the BLS notes is more than any other industry.

What's Driving the Growth?

Several key trends are converging today to make healthcare quite a desirable industry. "Hands-on medical/healthcare careers are in growth mode as Baby Boomers demand higher quality healthcare, and the

High-Growth Industries for 2009, as Predicted by Search Firms

- Healthcare
- Clean/Green Technology
- Pharmaceutical/Medical/Biotech
- Energy/Utilities
- Business Services

Source: 2009 ExecuNet's Executive Job Market Intelligence Report

Continued on page 4

| | |
|---|---|
| Learnings from Landings ExecuNet Member Makes Own Opportunity | 2 |
| Books Worth Your Time Lead By Example..... | 3 |
| Insider Insight Communication Styles: Can You Adjust to be Heard? | 6 |
| Your Career Advisor To Risk or Not to Risk: Determining the Right Next Steps | 7 |

Career-Enhancing Programs
June 2009
Hosted by Dave Opton,
founder and CEO, ExecuNet

- 6/25 — **Résumé Solutions for Challenging Situations** — Louise Kursmark
- 6/25 — **FREE PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS — Onboarding Q&A** — George Bradt
- 6/26 — **FREE PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS — Get on the Recruiter Radar** — Della Giles

Networking Meetings in Your Area
June/July/August 2009
Hosted by ExecuNet Facilitators

- 6/23 — **Vienna/Tysons Corner, VA Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Peter McCarthy
- 6/24 — **Toronto** — Martin Buckland
- 6/25 — **Atlanta Sr. Executive Roundtable** — J. Patrick Haly
- 6/25 — **Dallas** — Bob Hueglin
- 6/25 — **Columbus** — Janine Moon
- 6/26 — **St. Louis** — Ken Coleman & Randy Hove
- 6/26 — **White Plains** — Linsey Levine
- 7/1 — **New York City** — Judy Rosemarin
- 7/1 — **New York City Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Judy Rosemarin
- 7/8 — **Cincinnati** — Jennifer McClure
- 7/9 — **Seattle Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Susan Stringer
- 7/9 — **Columbia, MD** — Ed Loucks
- 7/9 — **Los Angeles** — Eileen Hupp
- 7/10 — **Tampa Bay** — Gina Poitio
- 7/13 — **Miami/Hollywood** — Jeannette Kraar
- 7/13 — **Boston Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Marg Balcom
- 7/14 — **Orlando** — Catherine Coates & Mike Murray
- 7/14 — **Seattle** — Susan Stringer
- 7/15 — **Chicago** — Gail Sussman Miller
- 7/15 — **Portland, OR** — Jean Walker
- 7/16 — **Palo Alto** — Bobbie LaPorte & Linda Holroyd
- 7/16 — **Vienna/Tysons Corner, VA** — Peter McCarthy
- 7/16 — **Minneapolis** — John Wetzel & Barbara Johnson
- 7/16 — **Indianapolis** — Romona Camarata
- 7/16 — **Pittsburgh/Cranberry Township** — Tina Winner
- 7/17 — **Parsippany** — Linsey Levine
- 7/20 — **Boston** — Marg Balcom
- 7/21 — **Vienna/Tysons Corner Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Peter McCarthy
- 7/23 — **Columbus** — Janine Moon
- 8/4 — **San Diego/Carlsbad** — Mark James
- 8/5 — **New York City** — Judy Rosemarin
- 8/5 — **Cincinnati** — Jennifer McClure
- 8/5 — **New York City Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Judy Rosemarin
- 8/6 — **Southern Wisconsin** — Clara Hurd Nydam & Tom Senge
- 8/10 — **Miami/Hollywood** — Jeannette Kraar
- 8/11 — **Orlando** — Catherine Coates & Mike Murray
- 8/11 — **Boulder** — Karen Armon
- 8/12 — **Portland, OR** — Jean Walker

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Learnings from Landings

ExecuNet Member Makes Own Opportunity

Some of the best advice job seekers ever receive is, “Make your own opportunity.” ExecuNet member Dan Gaffney took those words very seriously, and as a result, he landed in a new role this past February. “I thought I would find more career options,” says Gaffney. “After a couple of months, I dropped the searching and focused on what I can do to make a career.”

What Gaffney focused on was creating his own company, an internal audit and risk management advisory in which he serves as president and CEO. Gaffney suggests other job seekers restructure the focus of their job search beyond immediate goals and toward more long-term career objectives. “Get past the frustration of being out of a job and look forward,” says Gaffney. “Think positive and if there aren’t jobs in your market or career path, think hard about what you want to do and where you want to be in 5, 10 or 20 years. Then figure out how to make it happen.”

Making it happen was perhaps tougher at first for Gaffney. He says that he was surprised by the number of qualified job candidates who joined him in the market for a new position. “I felt very qualified and on top of my game,

My Member Profile
Other members will find and contact you through the information provided below. The more up-to-date and complete your information, the more relevant the connections you will make. **Your profile was last updated on 03/27/2009 at 12:40:48 PM.**

Click here if your profile is up-to-date
[View My Member Profile as others will see it >>>](#)

Name: Jim Thompson

My Network Introduction **Exp: Add/Update =**
I re-vitalize and improve underperforming information technology functions and create new departments by collaborating at all enterprise levels. I learn business processes, take ownership of problems, deliver customer solutions and mentor resources.
Strategic Operations, Research Operations, Senior Vice President.

My Networking Preferences: **Add/Update =**

I'm offering to:

- Respond to inquiries about my company or other companies I know well
- Help recruiters source candidates
- Share expertise and information about industries, products or companies I know well
- Provide a reference for past or present co-workers
- Consult on new ventures, deals and investment opportunities
- Consult with or mentor individuals interested in my area of interest

I'm seeking to:

- Explore new opportunities
- Reconnect with friends and colleagues
- Interact with those in my industry or profession
- Gain information about industries, products or companies of interest to me
- Connect with potential future employees or consultants and to explore new ventures, deals or investments

Work Experience: (last 3 or more positions) **add a position** **remove a position**

| Job Title | Company | Function | Industry | Years |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| GM, Operations | IBM | GM, Division or Business Manager | General Management Related | 3.5 |
| SVP, Strategic Operations | Procter & Gamble | Executive/Managing Director | General Management Related | 4.5 |
| VP, Research Operations | Gartner | Executive/Managing Director | General Management Related | 6 |

Other companies I know well:
Gartner, IBM, Executive, Procter, Google, AOL, Morgan Stanley, Procter Saftech

Areas of Interest: **Add/Update =**

Functional Interests: - General Management Related, COO/President & General Management Related, GM, Division or Business Manager

Industry Interests: - High Tech, Computer Related & High Tech, Software Related

Education: **Add/Update =**

| Degree | School |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| BA | New York University, 1979 |
| MBA | Columbia University, 1988 |
| ID | University of Connecticut, 1995 |

Professional Information: **Add/Update =**

- Certifications/Designations/Associations: Six Sigma Black Belt, PMP
- Additional Languages Spoken:
- Willing to Relocate: Yes

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but there are a lot of great people out of work,” says Gaffney. “Competition for jobs is incredible.”

Competition for time with recruiters was also a challenge during the quest for

Continued on page 8

Dan Gaffney's Strategies for Success

- Get business cards from day one with your personal contact information included. It's great for networking to have your own card with a title, such as CFO, management consultant, forensic accountant or whatever works for you.
- Update your profiles immediately — LinkedIn, ExecuNet, any online content with your company information — so that it is now fresh.
- Don't be embarrassed about being out in the job market — there are millions of us.
- Get to know social networking — Twitter, blogs, Facebook. Get your picture out on the profiles — a professional picture.
- Get involved in professional organizations and networking groups. Be selective, though. Some are just places to hand out résumés, and others are truly for networking.
- Do favors for other people to help them.
- Meet with three to four people a week for coffee, lunch or invite them to join you for a networking meeting or even a ballgame. Try to reconnect with people you haven't seen in years.

Books Worth Your Time: Q&A with Author John Baldoni

Lead By Example

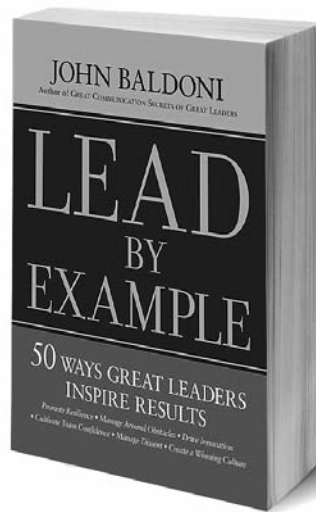
Filled with examples of visionary leaders who have achieved greatness, John Baldoni's most recent book, *Lead by Example* [Amacom, 2009], offers a leadership guru's insights on how to inspire others and build lasting results. The internationally recognized leadership consultant, speaker and author removes the intricacies of leadership and offers 50 easily understandable ways leaders can inspire results. Built around character, communication, defusing tension and developing team confidence, Baldoni's 50 ways to inspire results gets to the heart of what makes a leader effective.

In this exclusive ExecuNet interview, ExecuNet Editor Will Flammé asks the author to share some of his views on effective leadership. Here is some of what he had to say:

Q. Your book, *Lead by Example*, shows how to build trust and win the respect of the people one leads. What are the highlights of how one achieves these two goals?

A. Leaders build trust and then win the respect of their people by doing what the organization expects and needs them to do achieve reasonable and sustainable goals. That is, they put the right people in the right places with the right resources and allow them to achieve these goals. The good news is that I believe most bosses enter management situations with the support of their employees. Why? First of all, it makes life easy when you can believe that your boss is capable and competent. Second, employees want to work for someone who can help them do their jobs more effectively. So bosses receive the benefit of the doubt from their employees. The challenge for the boss is to turn that benefit of the doubt into trust and respect. That comes from doing four things right:

Set the right example. Leaders are judged by what they accomplish. Leadership is often about how you achieve those results; it is a collective act. You need the support of others to succeed, so it is your



responsibility to live the values that matter most to our society: love, integrity and honesty.

Act the role of a leader. Doing what the organization requires means helping it grow and develop. You put people into positions where they can succeed. You demonstrate adaptability and push for innovation. You also lead from the front. Be available during tough times, sometimes to lend a hand but always to provide counsel, support and resources so people can do their jobs effectively.

Handle tough issues. Successful organizations are those that push decision-making to the front lines. But when the decision has long-term consequences, you want leaders to decide.

Put the team first. One earns followers' respect by doing the hard work, helping others to succeed and finding ways to recognize those who achieve. Part of putting the team first means stepping out of the spotlight so others can receive credit. Shine light on others' accomplishments, and when things go wrong, accept responsibility. Accountability reinforces trust, and in the process, nurtures trust.

Q. Executives commonly state that meetings frequently consume too much of their days without sufficient value for the time spent. How can meetings be run more effectively?

A. Effective meetings begin with good thinking. That is, consider what you want to achieve at the meeting. Most meetings should be used for deliberation and decision-making. You want to use your e-communications for dissemination of information. When people come to the meeting, they will be asked for input into the issue. Ideally, you want the person closest to the issue to make the decision, but it may not always be possible. That's when it falls to the leader to decide. A good idea is to delegate the development of the agenda to direct reports on a regular basis. Ask these folks to send out the agenda in advance so attendees know what to expect and what is expected of them. This individual can also solicit ideas for what to discuss or what to share. If your item is included on the agenda, come prepared. Be brief. Too many folks use meetings for job justification. Leaders must make it clear meetings are for deliberation and decisions. Therefore, they should be short and to the point.

There will be times to discuss contentious issues; you can deliberate them without coming to a decision. It will be up to the leader to give everyone a voice in such meetings. That does not mean the leader has to do what is recommended by the team, only that she should listen to what others have to say.

When it comes to debate and deliberation, the leader should avoid speaking first. This gives others the opportunity to air their ideas before being influenced by what the leader has to say. It can lead to more honest opinions as well as a more robust debate, and if the leader actively solicits comments, he demonstrates he values what others have to say.

Q. How does a leader effectively navigate the line between being tough, fair and likable?

A. Leaders should strive to be respected; this will indicate that they are fair. As for likeability, that's another issue. Leaders may not always be liked because they have

Continued on page 8

Healthcare

Continued from page 1

elderly population comprises a greater percentage of the total population,” says Meghan Biro, principal of Massachusetts-based TalentCulture LLC. “Science and continuous new technology are fueling job growth and healthcare 2.0 and beyond.” Biro notes growth can also be expected in the construction and management of retirement and assisted living communities. There is also a growing trend toward “downspout” services, such as technology for elders and consulting “geriatric managers” who help seniors manage their daily life tasks and challenges.

Where the Opportunities Are

For some executives, a new career in healthcare may only require a shift in industry, not in job function. Experts agree that many open executive-level positions within the healthcare system are in functional areas such as finance, human resources, sales, marketing and information technology (IT), as well as procurement and supply chain management. Britt Nichols, co-founder of the National Senior Living Providers Network, an online community targeted to senior care providers, notes that IT and senior care are among the fastest growing areas within the healthcare sector.

“In the healthcare industry, even though it’s a growth industry, they’re focused on ways to reduce costs and improve efficiencies to patients,” says David Harap, global practice leader in life sciences and healthcare for Stanton Chase International, a global executive search firm. He says healthcare organizations are interested in implementing Six Sigma processes into their supply chain management. As a result, executives with such expertise in their backgrounds — even if they don’t have any healthcare experience — can find interesting career opportunities. “They’re recruiting talented people who can bring a different perspective,” says Harap.

There are newer areas, such as remote monitoring and testing, which could also create opportunities for executives without prior experience in the industry, notes

Debra Feldman, a Connecticut-based executive talent agent and job search consultant. “If it’s a new area for healthcare, there may not be an existing pool of candidates with experience,” says Feldman, noting how similar opportunities emerged when the Internet was in its infancy and people working in traditional media were pulled into new media because no one yet had new media experience. Interestingly, when healthcare first became a strong growth industry for job opportunities, many organizations recruited executives from the consumer products space because of their expertise in such areas as consumer marketing and customer service.

“New business models that incorporate technology to shift care closer to patients, such as e-health businesses that use telecommunications to enable virtual home visits, present an opportunity for innovative executives to disrupt how healthcare gets delivered and consumed in countries like the US,” says Dr. Jason Hwang, executive director of healthcare at Innosight Institute.

Harap cautions executives to be aware that while healthcare is among the most stable industries today, it is one in which changes occur at a slower pace than other industries. He says executives who might be accustomed to quicker action in other industries need to be sure they are comfortable with that type of climate before they make the transition.

J. Craig Honaman, principal of Georgia-based H&H Consulting Partners LLC, notes executives working within the healthcare sector may have to face relocation issues if they want to continue to advance their careers in this industry. He explains that if an executive decides to leave a particular healthcare institution, it is likely that entity is the only one of its kind in the region.

According to Hwang, the most career opportunities in healthcare will be in markets underserved by the healthcare system. “In the US, areas of growth reside in often-ignored regions like rural communities and inner cities. Worldwide, there are enormous opportunities in geographies where reliable and effective health systems have yet to be built,” says Hwang.

The Skills You Need

For executives already working in areas such as finance and human resources, oftentimes their current skills are enough to help them seamlessly transition into a similar position within the healthcare sector. Yet, Honaman notes the value of possessing a Master’s degree in either healthcare administration (MHA) or business administration (MBA). Healthcare administrator, CEO and executive director are just a few positions available to executives who possess an MHA, according to data from PayScale.

Many challenges leaders face in this sector are unlike what they face in their current industries, making industry knowledge a strong asset. Nichols says basic healthcare knowledge is important, and executives should have a strong understanding of government rules and regulations (such as Medicare and AHCA), nonprofit management and insurance.

“Anyone entering the healthcare sector must be comfortable with ethical dilemmas, in which you must make decisions that may not necessarily coincide with your own personal beliefs,” says Hwang.

Overall, leading innovation is a key attribute executives seeking to transition to the healthcare industry should have. Dr. John Kenagy, author of *Designed to Adapt: Leading Healthcare in Challenging Times*, says he feels there are plenty of opportunities for executives in this growing — and changing — industry. “The leading institutions of the future will develop highly modular delivery systems with a patient-centered front line focused on rapid experimentation and learning that gets patients exactly what they need at continually lower cost,” says Kenagy. To succeed in what Kenagy terms the “new disruptive healthcare,” he says executives need to:

- Excel at return on assets rather than depend on return on investment.
- Regenerate capital rather than access and spend capital.
- Problem solve with ingenuity rather than technology.
- Create new best practices rather than copy and implement someone else’s.
- Develop people, not things, as the organization’s number one asset.

Continued on page 5

Healthcare

Continued from page 4

Planning Your Transition

Since the opportunities within healthcare span a wide range of functional areas and organizations, experts agree executives seeking to make a transition into this sector should conduct research on the various facets of healthcare and its participating companies before sending their résumé or making their first connection within the industry. “They have to understand that healthcare is a very big industry,” says Tim Tolan, senior partner of the healthcare IT and services practice at executive search firm Sanford Rose Associates, of executives considering making the switch. “They need to figure out what part of healthcare they want to be in. Saying you want to be in healthcare is too broad. You need to be laser-focused and know where you want to play.”

When identifying which organizations should be added to your target list of companies, look for the most innovative. “Watch for the few health systems really making a difference, then cultivate the right skills; network yourself and you

Expert Resources:

- Meghan Biro, TalentCulture LLC (TalentCulture.com)
- Gwen Darling, HealthcareITCentral.com (HealthcareITCentral.com)
- Debra Feldman, JobWhiz (JobWhiz.com)
- David Harap, Stanton Chase International (StantonChase.com)
- J. Craig Honaman, H&H Consulting LLC (CareerTransitionCoaching.com)
- Dr. Jason Hwang, Innosight Institute (InnosightInstitute.org)
- Dr. John Kenagy (KenagyAssociates.com)
- Britt Nichols, National Senior Living Providers Network (nslpn.com)
- Tim Tolan, Sanford Rose Associates (SanfordRose.com)

will be pulled in,” advises Kenagy.

Helping organizations both reduce costs and improve operational efficiencies are always in-demand skills — regardless of industry. “Streamlining business practices by providing more efficient data management and customer service are two things that most healthcare organizations will be working on for some time to come,” says Nichols. “By seeing the need that a current healthcare organization may have and then targeting that area as a place to cut costs or increase efficiencies, executives can help create a new opportunity utilizing their current business knowledge and strategies.”

HealthcareITCentral.com CEO Gwen Darling transitioned into the

healthcare industry by utilizing those skills she already possessed — turning her background in marketing and management into a role as president of a medically-based skincare company. She then transitioned to the travel nursing industry thanks to a connection one of her skincare company board members made before moving into the healthcare IT space when her travel nursing agency consulting client launched a healthcare IT division.

“Although I’m a quick study, after several years, I’m still learning and am fortunate to have a strong network of industry professionals whom I can turn to if and when I need true ‘insider’ clarity,” says Darling. “I’ve heard similar stories from other professionals with strong marketing, sales and/or project management backgrounds — the core competencies in these three areas seem to translate well.”

Nichols says executives can begin their transition into the healthcare industry by volunteering. “This gives them some front line exposure and familiarizes them with some tools and language that are utilized on a daily basis,” says Nichols. “It also shows a commitment to the transition and enables some of the learning to have occurred before an interview.

Healthcare employers greatly appreciate not having to train people on the basics, and they like seeing the positive attitude and dedication to continued learning.”

If you’re committed to the industry, it can certainly lead to a rewarding future. “For most people, there’s a greater sense of fulfillment [in the healthcare industry],” says Harap. “People usually feel good about what they’re doing.” Tolan adds, “Regardless of what role you play, your work in some way touches the care a patient will get, and that means something.” ■

Adding Healthcare to Your Current Business Portfolio

Keep in mind that taking advantage of the growth in healthcare doesn’t necessarily mean you have to transition completely into a new position within the industry. Another viable option is to find a way in which to connect your current skills and product/service offerings to organizations operating within the healthcare sector — thus just adding healthcare as another market in which you and your organization can serve.

Debra Feldman, an executive talent agent and job search consultant, says she has worked with clients who have done just that. “Our thinking is he can apply his talent and skills representing vendors currently serving this market or those with a product or service that can be adapted or aligned to fit a healthcare customer’s requirements,” she says.

Feldman points to one particular client, an IT sales executive with experience in business intelligence, CRM (customer relationship management) and enterprise systems, who wanted to leverage his skills in the healthcare market. A three-step strategy was created to target specific potential employers:

1. Focusing on application providers that have an installed base of healthcare clients where he would be able to enlarge the footprint of services his new employer provided for individual client organizations.
2. Initiating conversations with IT companies with an installed healthcare client base or a product or service that healthcare clients need and the vendor is interested in expanding to support healthcare clients.
3. Networking and meeting within senior management at systems integrators (such as Bearing Point and Accenture) with an existing healthcare practice to learn more about this field and ask for introductions to their project partners (Seibel, Oracle, HP, IBM, Cisco) who might be interested in his IT sales background for their business development team.

Insider Insight

Communication Styles: Can You Adjust to be Heard?

By Stacey Hanke

We cannot “not” communicate. Our non-verbal behavior speaks volumes whether we realize it or not. We’ve heard it before: “Know who you’re talking to and adapt your communication style to your listeners’ style.”

As many times as we’ve heard these words to be the key for creating and managing relationships, I observe the opposite to be true.

Whether I’m observing a speaker or sales representative, or having a one-to-one conversation with a client, it’s obvious their messages are about them. They’re oblivious to reading their listeners’ non-verbal and verbal cues. This is not that difficult to do. Imagine where you could take your relationships with others if you took the time to listen to what works for them.

We have preferences — certain skills and behaviors that make us who we are. Recognizing styles in yourself and others can help you influence and build relationships and become a better communicator.

Identifying Communication Styles

There are a variety of instruments that identify individual communication styles. For the purpose of this article, I’ve chosen the four communication styles by Swiss psychologist Carl Jung. This instrument is easy to follow and apply.

These styles are based on tendencies to be task-oriented versus people-oriented and easygoing versus take-charge. While these are simplifications, tendencies of the four styles are:

Controller — Take-charge, wants control of themselves, others and situations, task-oriented, drivers focused on the end goal.

Collaborator — Easy-going, relationship-oriented and enjoys working with people toward consensus.

Tips for a Flexible and Effective Communication Style

Good listener — Ask questions to learn more, and listen to non-verbal behavior.

Open to change — Be willing to change your mind, look for alternatives and work with others to resolve conflict.

Learners — Be willing to learn new behaviors and what makes others tick; ask for feedback.

Positive — Learn from your mistakes and move on; be proactive and take responsibility.

Respectful and sensitive — Accept differences and show appreciation for others, and change your behavior to match your listener.

If your listener’s facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice or gestures concern you, check it out.

- Ask if they have questions.
- Ask for their opinion, thoughts and what’s important to them.
- Ask if they need clarification.

Take this five-minute challenge: During your next conversation, listen to the other person’s non-verbal behavior. Pay attention to your reaction. Are you willing to adjust your style? Are you willing to adapt your message to grab their attention? Is your message for you or them? You can develop most of the above skills that don’t come naturally to you.

They’re worth taking the time to develop because of the positive results you will receive:

- Influence your listener to take action.
- Avoid misinterpretation.
- Build a stronger relationship.

Analyzer — Detail-oriented, logical, analyzes others and situations, works best alone to come up with solutions, may take more time to make a decision and take action.

Socializer — Outgoing, thrives on change and meeting people, gets energy from others, and works best when brainstorming with others to make a decision and take action.

Understanding Behaviors

By being aware of your communication preference, you’ll have a better understanding of how others perceive you. The ability to recognize and adapt to your listeners’ communication styles will make them feel like you’ve taken the time to listen and focus on their needs. This results in a positive experience and strengthens the relationship.

You cannot be 100 percent sure what people mean through their non-verbal behavior. You can look for consistencies

in their gestures, eye movement, tone of voice and facial expressions.

Controller — Direct, prefers to be in control, sense of urgency, louder volume and express limited to no emotion.

Collaborator — Appears relaxed, asks a lot of questions, win-win attitude, hesitant to make decisions and highly emotional with an expressive tone.

Analyzer — Cautious, logical, soft-spoken, monotone voice, limited eye contact and facial expressions.

Socializer — Outspoken, quick to make decisions, assertive, fast talker, expressive gestures, facial expressions and tone.

Tailoring the Communication

Here’s how to communicate with each of these individuals:

Controller — Get to the point; state what’s in it for them and ask straightforward questions. Communicate

Continued on page 8

Your Career Advisor

To Risk or Not to Risk: Determining the Right Next Steps

By Sandra Naiman

You know that to be successful in business you must take calculated risks. You understand the importance of going out on a limb and being accountable for your decisions. You might have made some miscalculations in the past, learned from your mistakes and been forgiven for them. Indeed you might even have been told that if you haven't made mistakes, you aren't taking enough risks. What is also true is that *no one, for any reason whatsoever, is immune to the repercussions* of what turns out to be a bad decision or too bold of a stand. So how do you determine when to take a risk and when to hunker down and opt for the safer route?

Identify the Risk Factors

Of course, as in the past, you know to calculate the probability of success versus failure and weigh the advantages of the former against the costs of the latter. You have factored in the short-term losses that must be absorbed in order to realize long-term gains. You have sought honest feedback from trusted advisors and you are reasonably certain that you have a good grasp of the situation. Now it's time to make sure you have all of your bases covered.

Anticipate Problems

Assess up-front everything that might go wrong and troubleshoot ahead of time. Identify the factors that are not under your control and make a "what if" list. Determine those circumstances that can be overcome and those that cannot. For the latter, be honest about the probability that they could occur and go into the venture with your eyes wide open.

Set Realistic Expectations

Be sure that all stakeholders are on the same page about what the outcome will

look like, what the benefits will be and what is required along the way. Be clear about the short-term losses that must be tolerated in order to achieve the desired results.

Paint a realistic picture of the speed bumps and obstacles, and make sure that they really hear you.

Assess Commitment

Make sure that everyone on whom the outcome depends is committed to doing whatever it takes to achieve it. Identify the individual wins for the stakeholders and those who will do the work and ensure that they understand what's in it for them.

You want to be sure from the beginning that you have the commitment and cooperation necessary to take you where you want to go.

Allow also for the possibility that there might be people in a position to sabotage the outcome and that they might have a reason to do so. Should this be the case, determine whether or not they can be circumvented or won over.

Know Your History

Check your recent track record. No matter what precautions you have taken, there is always the possibility of surprises and failure. You want to be sure that your recent achievements are sufficient to buffer a loss. It is more likely that a noticeable flop will be forgiven if you are backed up by some equally noticeable triumphs.

If, on the other hand, you have no wins of late, you are less likely to be forgiven a major miscalculation. And you certainly want to be careful about taking a big risk if you have accumulated a series of losses.

Determine the Worth

Consider the level of risk tolerance: the company's and your own. The tolerance for risk varies and could certainly

decrease during an economic downturn. If stakeholders are risk averse, they are likely to over-react to even the slightest glitch. This goes for you, too. If the process will bring sleepless nights and high stress, the opportunity might not be worth the reward. Further, a low risk tolerance can actually undermine the chances of success.

Follow Your Instincts

Check your gut. After you have considered all of the above, turn to your instincts. What do they tell you? If your gut and your mind do not agree, think about why that might be the case. While there is no scientific explanation for why instincts are correct, there is sufficient data to support that this is often the case.

Some suggest that it is because instincts have picked up information overlooked by the conscious mind. So if your gut cautions against an undertaking, no matter how much the data indicates otherwise, think carefully before taking the risk.

Beware analysis paralysis. While it is important to have a good grasp of what you are walking in to, there comes a time when a decision must be made. Do your best reconnaissance in a reasonable time frame and then move in one direction or another. ■

Sandra Naiman is an organizational development consultant, career and executive coach based in Denver. She has more than 20 years of experience and has worked with Fortune 500 companies worldwide to enhance individual and organizational performance. Naiman is the author of The High Achiever's Secret Codebook: The Unwritten Rule for Success at Work. She can be contacted at 303-377-5296 or smnaiman@comcast.net

Learnings from Landings Continued from page 2

a new opportunity. “Now more than ever, recruiters will not focus on you. They want to fill jobs and can find a lot of great candidates — and they’ll place whomever is easiest for them,” says Gaffney.

“There is no loyalty (or very little). Don’t waste your time being frustrated or expecting loyalty from the recruiters.

Books Worth Your Time Continued from page 3

to make tough decisions about the fate of individuals, teams and the company. Too much affinity with individuals can lead to unhealthy favoritism. That’s how incompetent people stay in their positions.

Leaders must also be fair, but not always equal. That is, you create a level playing field where everyone can achieve. But those who achieve more will be rewarded with more opportunity as well as more resources. Those who do not achieve immediately may need more

Insider Insight Continued from page 6

confidently with a clear and concise message. Avoid the clutter and fluff.

Collaborator — Show an interest in them; listen patiently and give them a good “feel” about your message or what you’re asking them to do.

Analyzer — Avoid small talk; present facts and data, and provide details and the process you’ll follow to service them.

Look to networking as the best approach,” he adds.

Gaffney says networking proved to be the most effective tool that he used during his job search. He encourages other job seekers to get back in touch with people they haven’t seen in a long time and “not in, ‘Hey, I need a job,’ but ‘Here’s where I am in my career and am just reconnecting with you.’”

It can be just as effective to build

seasoning, coaching and development.

Toughness comes from making hard decisions about big issues; things that affect the fate of the organization. Such decisions include decisions about promotion and layoffs. The operative principle is to do what is best for the organization. That is, choose the best to promote and the least talented to let go. Life does not always work that way, but if a leader truly tries to do what is best for the organization as a whole, she will be on the right path.

Q. What is the role of humor when utilized by an effective leader?

Socializer — Show interest in them; be upbeat, and tie their personal experiences to your message.

Determining Your Style

What does your communication style communicate to others? Does your serious expression communicate you don’t want to be there? Does the lack of eye contact communicate you’re disinterested? Does your quick rate of speech communicate you’re in a hurry and don’t have time for them?

connections with new contacts as well. By regularly updating your ExecuNet profile and your networking preferences, you can easily inform other ExecuNet members of your career status and what opportunities and relationships you seek. The profiles can help you find relevant contacts within your current industry (or even an industry in which you want to transition), and they make it easy for new contacts to find you. ■

A. Times are tough and leaders are called upon to make tough decisions, but that does not mean they are not human. Humor is a way of revealing humanity; it works to lighten us up so that we are open to the world especially our people. A good way to gain trust is let people know that you have a sense of humor. Self-deprecation is a good door opener. Tell jokes on yourself. Make it safe for others to tell stories on themselves, but make certain it is done in good fun. Mean spirited humor can be off-putting and creates barriers between leader and follower. Avoid it. ■

- Ask for feedback from your peers.
- Audiotape yourself to hear what others hear.
- Take time to observe the behaviors of people you admire and follow their lead. ■

Stacey Hanke is founder of 1st Impressions Consulting Inc., a professional speaking company. She can be contacted at StaceyHanke.com

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Founder & CEO: David Opton

Executive Editor: Lauryn Franzoni

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Editor: Marji McClure

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ExecuNet

295 Westport Avenue

Norwalk, CT 06851

Phone: (800) 637-3126

E-mail: info@execunet.com



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