LFM SDM Web Seminar
Topic: Recruiting/ HR Expert Panel
Date: April 13th, 2007
Time: 12:00 pm, Eastern / 9:00 am Pacific
Session Details:
In the midst of a job change? Thinking about switching industries.
Please come join us for this exciting expert panel.
Learn how the other side sees it. Get some great tips on how to leverage your experience. Learn how technology has changed the job search process.

Panelists:
Adam Zak, Executive Search Consultant
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NOTES FROM DISCUSSION

from Alison McCaffree to All Participants:
Welcome to the LFM SDM Web Seminar series
from Alison McCaffree to All Participants:
Type any questions for our panelist HERE.
from Alison McCaffree to All Participants: Please press *6 to MUTE your phone, UNMUTE with #6
from Alison McCaffree to All Participants: PLEASE TYPE QUESTIONS HERE

from Alison McCaffree: What is the best way to find out information on companies I am interested in?

Adam: You want to find the right kind of information. Websites can be out of date and self promoting. It is best to use networking to get a true feel for a company and its opportunity.

Debra: use the LFM / MIT network
from Darrel Quah to All Participants: Do you agree with the statement that it is always a good approach to look for one's next job while one is gainfully employed?

Adam: Yes in general you should always be analyzing where your career is going. I am looking for personal insight - the what and the why of your career. Always reflect on what is next for you in the short term and the long term. It is too easy to just put your nose to the grindstone.

from Neha Bar to All Participants: From your perspective, how do you view folks with significant breaks in their career (1-2 year) leave of absence as they re-enter...is it critical to explain the time...or weave into your story?

from Daniel Crocker to All Participants: Asking this question on behalf of my wife - how are employers viewing 3-5 year breaks in employment due to having children?

Adam: You need to justify why you took the break. (He and his wife traveled Europe for a year or so.) Then move on! Companies will think it is reasonable and concentrate on the value you bring to the organization. How did that break add value to you?

Debra: Answer the question before it comes up - address it in a cover letter or resume. I have even seen “Mom” on a resume.

Adam: You don’t want any hint of hiding anything or lying - there are too many candidates out there - a company can turn away immediately.

from Geoff Langos to All Participants: Any advice on how to recruit technical people to an industry that isn't "sexy" or well known?

Adam: There is always something in an industry you can sell - hours/ flexibility etc.

from Ruby Lam to All Participants: As graduates from the LFM/SDM program, we are often put into leadership positions which normally requires others many years of experience, as we move into our next steps in our career (after the 1st LFM job), how should we position/sell ourselves to leadership positions which would require 10-20 years of experience (on paper)?

Adam: Concentrate on the results that you deliver - don’t get caught up in the actual number of years that they put in. ExL of an LFM at Dell who is many years ahead of 90% his peer group. Focus on what you have accomplished - Most companies see the track record. You want a company that values that - if not it may not be a company that you want to work for.

from Daniel Crocker to All Participants: Do exec search firms tend to have regional strengths or are they tending to be more functional, e.g. focus on ops management?
Adam: Both. Some are regional - many are topical - many have both. You find it all. It is a matrix of people trying to serve many markets.

**from Kathleen to All Participants:** A co-worker and I have been searching for jobs for the past several months. We have been working with recruiters, applying online, and reviewing websites (i.e., careerbuilder.com). Is there a better way to do this?

Debra: Yes. Once you figure out what it is you want to do: Tell your story through your network. Through your connections. Be proactive.

Adam: 63% of positions are filled through networking connections. 25% of the people we find to fill positions (for recruiting) are found through referrals. It’s all about personal contact with people.

Debra: Always be networking. And be open to others and help them in their networking. You can’t just decide to activate your network when you need something - it won’t work - you need to help other and actively maintain. Also - go to things that you are genuinely interested in - if you don’t feel like going don’t. But if there is an interesting topic or people who you are interested in meeting - go and talk to them.

**from sangita to All Participants:** If you've had 7-8 experience in a specialized industry/role, how do you position yourself when switching industries?

Adam: It’s about transferable skills Ex: I’m looking for a Window glass manufacturing positions and we are looking in Auto/aero and consumer good for someone with the right background. What skills does that other industry need?

**from Kathleen to All Participants:** Other than careerbuilder.com and monster.com, are there other job search websites that you would recommend searching for jobs?

Adam: There are two things to do on monster 1) Post resume for others to see and hope that someone contacts you. 2) Actively search through the postings and respond These are not the best and sometimes risky.

For 1) you may become a commodity - you risk your resume being send to employers in many different ways and you might not even know it.
For 2) We have clients who are inundated with 1000s of applicants from these postings. It is very hard to get your unique value add to the people making the decision.
What I would suggest is to identify the companies that are looking for something in the position you think you want and then use your network to find out more. - get to the right person in the company a different way.

**from Kathleen to All Participants:** You have mentioned networking several times. Can you elaborate on methods of networking? For example, someone just mentioned networking events...how do you find out about these events?
Debra: You can use anything to find these events: MIT / Industry associations / employees etc. Follow your curiosity - use the network to do informational interviews in the job or area you are interested in. Have coffee or lunch - get to know their business and tell them about yours. Its is about personal relationships and information to get advanced knowledge that gets you to your goal.

from Ruby Lam to All Participants: what is the best job search strategies for relocating from one region of the world to another?

Karina (joining late): Do your research upfront to make sure there is a fit for the company - its frustrating when candidates don’t even know the company. When you are in an interview - make sure you keep an open mind - even if you have done extenive research on the company - there is still a lot to learn.
Relocating - We do a lot of work with getting visas for people. It can take a long time - over a year with one person. Make sure that your skills fit a need that that company can not find in their area.
If you can gain work status in the country first.
Make sure you share your motivation for wanting to move to the area. If its college friends/ family or even that you have always wanted to live there - if its genuine let them know so that the company is willing to invest the time in you.

Adam: hook the value you add - especially if it is not already there? If you can get an internal transfer to the region that is better - you have more of a support group with your existing company. Expat assignments are decreasing - we want to place people who are already in the area. Try to get a rotational assignment. Again the relationships through your network are key. Let them know what problem you solve for the.

Debra: look in the LFM Virtual Community / Sloan website ? MIT and find people who are in the area and network with them. - do a get together.

from A-P Hurd to All Participants: follow up to question on switching industries: if a company is interested in someone from another industry, how to you find out if they are really going to value that new perspective once you get there, or whether you are really going to be swimming upstream in a company where most people don't want to change, and you're not really enfranchised to make change?

Karina: Get a sense of other employees and how they fit into the company. HR might let you talk to them. If you have a valuable skill set then the industry is less important and they will value you. Its important to come in with a positive attitude. Ask to talk to other people at the offer stage. Use your recruiter to find other people when it is earlier than than.

from Johnson Wu to All Participants: Besides the skillsets and job qualifications fit, what are some of your thoughts on how you can assess whether there's a cultural fit between you and the company, you and the organization, and you and your boss?
Adam: Company should be interested in communicating about the culture. If it is not a good fit for you then you will leave or they will fire you and either way it is a failure. Find out they type of people who succeed in this company. Use your network and find out the people who are at the company or people who have left the company and ask them why they have stayed or left. Ex: we recruited a change agent reporting directly to the CEO within 12mo that person was gone - the organization rejected the work he was doing.

Debra: Ask a lot of open ended question san dn she what you get back. What does it take to be successful in this organization.

**from Nick Cravalho to All Participants:** What would you like to see in a cover letter? (length, content, etc.)

KarinaL Short and sweet. Should have specifics on the candidates situation - what he/she is looking for - why career change / relocation/ Explain anything that doesn’t make sense.

Adam: Short. Help me to help you. Not more then one page. Summarize what you done - show you’ve thought about it. And tell me how it is transferable to another organizations. Narrow down what you want to do.
I ask to enclude compensation information. We have a history/ correlations with age/ experience etc and we want to know your range.
Recruiters want a broader picture. My job is to find the best possible match and that includes $$ - I need to know about the individual.

Karina: It helps to save time if the compensation information is known. We want to give offers that the candidate will accept. Telling your recruiter helps to negotiate. Not in the cover letter to an employeer - but later.

Debra: IN coverletter sto companies make sure your expectations and values are there.

**from Darrel Quah to All Participants:** One specific question for Ms. Karina Miller on the initial screening of candidates - what are the specific attributes that would stand out, both positively and not so positively? i.e. # of pages on the resume, frequency of job change, resume content in terms of previous job task descriptions vs. job accomplishments?

Karina: Its about the quality of the education - about making sense of obvious job changes - no defensiveness. If you are a recent grad then GPA and extra curricular are important. Negative might be: jumping around - explain. Unclear Career Progression. Why did you make a choice to step back in responsibility. Also the quality of the companies that you work for is important.
Adam: If you work for a company that noone knows - then give a brief synopsis of what business there are in - especially if it is very technical. Do not just list your job tasks - there is no value add. You want accomplishement with metrics - numbers. Point to transferable skills. The number of pages is depended on the individual and appropriate to the audience. I don’t want a one page resumem of a 25 year executive - I know that there is a lot more information - 3 pages is ok. With detail. Make sure that I truly understand you. But make sure it is edited for content.

Karina: If you are an engineer - tell us the role you played in the project. If you are sales/support = tell us what customers you worked with.

A good career coach can help you bring out the specifics that need to be in your resume.

**from Daniel Crocker to All Participants:** Can you comment on making incremental vs. more dramatic career changes - are skills seen generally as portable enough for LFM grads to make it worth shooting for a more dramatic career change right off the bat?

Adam: There is always risk in changing. It is about quantifying what you can do in that new role. It might be highly unusual to make a big jump from technical to Financial role. You might have to move in steps.

Karina: We are looking for the very best - it can be a challenge if you haven’t done exactly what we are hiring you for. Quantifying the best fit. Sometime employers do want someone that has a fresh perspective who can think outside the box. You need to evaluate the degrees of change you are trying to make and you may find that you need a long term plan - ie take it incrementally.

**from Wayne Firsty to All Participants:** Does working with a recruiter sometimes backfire in that it puts an extra 30% price tag on that person if hired.

Karina: Recruiters have different sets of companies they work with. If they are good at what they do - then they will sell you no matter that there is an additional cost. We use recruiters because the investment in time and communications. They have a broader reach - and specialized knowledge - international and national network.

Adam: There’s only one way I can think of that it could be a negative: if you find a recruiter and they present you on a contingency - that can be a harder sell. Multiple directions could also be negative. We work exclusively on retainer basis. Our contract states that if a company finds a candidate outside of us than they have to refer them to us to be in consideration with the other candidates.

Karina: I agree that a recruiter on a retainer is the best way to go.
from Kathleen to All Participants: Are there any websites that you can recommend for finding recruiters for specific companies/industries?

Karina: Used Linked IN to find recruiters. Use your network. Try Zoominfo.com or just a Google search - type in function position recruiting industry and area and you should find lots.

Adam: I’m amazed at the different ways we get candidates - conferences, networking, internet, referrals etc.

Adam: One directory I would mention is the Directory of Executive Recruiters by Kennedy. They vet all there entries and they make money selling the list. [http://www.kennedyinfo.com/js/der.html](http://www.kennedyinfo.com/js/der.html)

From Alison to All: How would a person go about developing there story?

Adam: Ask yourself the 5 whys. Whalk through your career and ask what did I expect? How did it turn out? What would I do differently? Write down the answers. Come back in a few days and do it again. Go through the processes many times. After you’ve done that - you have done 70-80% f the work for a job search. Now you know to talk about your value add.

Karina: I would add: What did you love or hate about the position? What things didn’t you have interest in. Where and why did you go that why? Is that they way you still want to go?


Weave your strengths into the conversation about your career history. These kinds of things can be a differentiator.

Adam: Often these strengths: teambuilding, networker etc are the differentiator.

from Daniel Crocker to All Participants:Thanks for the informative session! from Rodrigo Sanchez, '02 to All Participants:Thank you for the great insights! from Wayne Firsty to All Participants:Thank you. from Geoff Langos to All Participants:Thanks