

# STRIVE

The Newsletter of the Professional Service Group of West Caldwell

November 2010

Volume 1 Issue 3

## The Role of Human Resources in the Hiring Process

By Alyson Librizzi and Steve Wilson

Earlier this year, a very informative presentation was given on the role of Human Resources in the hiring process by **PSGWC** active member and HR professional, **Steve Wilson**. The presentation gave job seekers an insider's view of what HR actually does and how you can use that knowledge to assist you in your job search. HR is a service function and their job is to fulfill the company's staffing needs. A lot of job seekers have misconceptions about the role of HR.



**Steve Wilson is a Human Resources professional and member of the West Caldwell PSG.**

Many job seekers view HR as an obstacle or the proverbial brick wall that prevents them from obtaining a desired job position because HR is the first entity of a company to screen them in the hiring process. Having a negative view of HR is detrimental for a job applicant. Applicants should understand that HR can work for them and try to place them in a job position matching their experience and skills. At the same time, HR can be providing the hiring manager with the same service function to fill their open job position. In essence, HR is trying to make a sale to fill the hiring manager's open job position. The job seekers are the product trying to sell themselves as the best candidate for a job position and the hiring manager is the HR recruiter's customer.

### Working with HR

Job seekers need to understand the hiring process of HR and what is expected of them in that process. The HR recruiting process

usually involves many steps. Initially HR may schedule a telephone interview to get more information, ask about specific skills, and judge communication abilities. HR will schedule the interview with the hiring manager and manage the employment application process. Always try to be available for any suggested appointment and flexible in your schedule; understand that a job offer may be delayed until you have completed the company job application. After the initial interview, the

HR recruiter and hiring manager will review notes on candidate interviews. There may be multiple rounds of candidate interviews that can be repeated several times due to difficulty filling positions. Be patient because you may be called back for multiple interviews.

Here are some key tips for making a positive impression on HR professionals:

- Be confident, positive in thought and response and don't forget to SMILE.
- Be aware that the HR person you are meeting with may not be the ultimate decision-maker. However, they may have significant input into the hiring decision-making process so do not underestimate their role's importance at the company.
- Make certain that your resume is accurate and relevant to the job field you are seeking.
- Be punctual, articulate and well groomed in an interview.

*Continued on page 2*

### Contents

02

Out and About

04

Speakers Recap

07

Landings

08

Volunteering  
at the PSGWC

Credits

New Members

---

**Practice discussing every accomplishment on your resume so that you are prepared to answer any interview questions inspired by them.**

- Go to the interview prepared with knowledge about the company's history, goals, positions and how their business operates to demonstrate that you are interested in working for them.
  - Bring your job references to an interview even though it's not required at this stage of the hiring process. Make sure that your references are available before going on the interview as they will be checked during the candidate selection stage of the hiring process.
  - Ask questions at an interview to express interest in the job position and company. HR should describe the company, position, department culture, goals, expectations and history to you. If they don't provide this information in the interview, ask about them. The more you know about the position and company, the faster you will know if it's a suitable job position for you.
  - Practice discussing every accomplishment on your resume so that you are prepared to answer any interview questions inspired by them. HR designs interview questions for each job position. Study the job opening duties and requirements and have a positive response for each that demonstrates your accomplishments. Keep in mind that an interviewer will evaluate your oral and written communication skills, behavioral skills, as well as your knowledge and past, applicable expertise.
  - After an interview always follow up with thank you letters to each person that you interviewed with because it shows that you are detailed oriented, possess positive behavioral skills and are courteous. In the final analysis, it could be a determining factor that convinces them to hire you rather than another candidate.
  - HR reviews resumes from various sources such as from internal applicants, various job boards, company management, staffing companies, job seekers who mail or fax in their applications for employment and from referrals. As an active job seeker, you should use many different venues and approaches to get your resume in front of the recruiter or hiring manager.
  - Follow up with HR on a job position you applied for or interviewed for to convey to them that you are still interested in the position and working for them. HR can provide you with useful feedback on the outcome of your job application or interview. Include HR contacts in your network because you never know when a job opportunity will become available.
- Remember throughout the hiring process that HR's main purpose is to be a service whose function it is to fulfill the company's staffing needs at the lowest cost possible. Being a no cost candidate can be a positive consideration for being hired. When interviewing, don't lose sight of the fact that YOU are also interviewing the company interviewer to determine whether the job position and company is the best fit for you. ■

---

## **Out and About While Job Hunting**

**By Lou Nocito**

**A**nybody who has been out of work for a while knows the stresses we all deal with. Financial concerns, health issues, changes in family dynamics-- all of these are by-products of the changes people go through when dealing with losses. And don't kid yourself, losing a job ranks on the stress scale right up there with the loss of a loved one. There are many ways to deal with the stress, some healthier than others.

One of the sure ways to deal with stress is getting or being active. You don't need to

join a gym or do calisthenics to be active. A good walk will get your blood flowing and your heart pumping. What better way to do this than with a group enjoying the outdoors. What most people in our area do not realize is that there is a 2200 acre preserve, the **South Mountain Reservation**, that is right on our doorsteps. **The South Mountain Conservancy** is a volunteer organization that has taken up the responsibility for stewarding this wonderful resource.

*Continued on page 3*

**Out and About** *continued from page 2*

In addition to maintaining the reservation, the Conservancy has a 9 month schedule of free hikes open to the public. There are hikes for every level of ability, from an hour long stroll to a 7 hour, 12 mile hike. There is no need to sign up in advance, just show up at the starting point and time and come along. If you have any questions about the hike, call the leader listed. The hike and other information about Conservancy activities can be found at [www.somocon.org](http://www.somocon.org).

The hiking schedule for November is:

**Sunday, Nov. 7,  
10:30 a.m.—12:30**

**p.m.:** Walk the Dog—The last one for 2010. A hike for people and their canine friends. We will meet at the Dog Park off Crest Drive and stroll a series of woods roads and back trails. Due to county regulations, you must keep your pet on leash for the entire hike and clean up after them. Leader: **Lou Nocito** 973-953-7099.

**Saturday, Nov. 13,  
9:30—11:00 a.m.:** Along the River & Ponds—a Family Hike. Good especially for families with children 4 to 8 years old. Meet at Locust Grove, opposite the Millburn Library and RR station. 2-3 miles taken at an easy pace. Locust Grove is on a short driveway into the park off of Glen Ave. 0.3 miles from the traffic light on Glen and Brookside Drive. Leader: **Dave Hogenauer:** 973-762-1475 (cell on day of hike only: 973-901-0824)

**Sunday, Nov 14, 10:00 a.m.—12:00**  
**p.m.:** Oakdale Loop. A stroll of about 4 miles at a moderate pace with only one moderately up-hill section. Meet at Oakdale Picnic Grove off of Cherry Lane, about 0.3 miles south of the light on Northfield Ave., or one mile north of the light on South Orange Ave. Leader: **Lou Nocito:** 973-953-7099 (cell).

**Saturday, Nov. 20, 9:30 a.m.—12:30**  
**p.m.:** Historical Tour—The early years. We will walk at a moderate pace making frequent

stops to hear how the park was formed, the obtaining of the first pieces of property for the park, the CCC, and taking a stop at pit mines dug by Maplewood residents in the early 1800's. We will then visit the famous Washington Rock, where Washington was thought, incorrectly, to have viewed the Battle of Springfield. Bring Snack.

About 4-5 miles. Meet at Bramhall Terrace. Take Crest Drive near the top of the mountain on S. Orange Ave. 3/8 mile to and park opposite the lookout on your left.

Leader: **Dave Hogenauer,** 973-762-1475

**Sunday, Nov. 21,  
2:30—4:30 p.m.:**

Turtle Back Trail out of Tulip Springs. We will walk at an easy to moderate pace about 3-4 miles on the Turtle Back Trail, starting at the newly rerouted segment near Tulip Springs. Good for families with children 6 and older. Tulip Springs is on the east side of Cherry Lane, 0.4 miles from the light on S. Orange Ave. and 0.8 miles south of the light on North-

field Ave. When you turn into the entry road where a small sign says "Tulip Springs", turn immediately to your right for Tulip Springs. (Straight ahead is the Boy Scout Area.) Leader: **Dave Hogenauer** 973-762-1475 (day of hike only: 973-901-0824)

**Sunday, Nov. 28. 10:00 a.m.—12:30**

**p.m.:** Woods Loop 3—WALK OFF THAT LAST PIECE OF PIE. A hike using various woods roads in the Turtle Back area. Meet at the Turtle Back Picnic Area. Driving east on Northfield Ave., pass the Zoo and go to the second traffic light at Walker Rd. on the right. Turn and go about 0.1 miles to a drive into the park on the right. About 3 miles at a moderate pace with a possible side trip to the famous Turtle Back Rock. Leader: **Lou Nocito:** 973-953-7099 (cell). ■

SEE YOU ON THE TRAILS



---

**In addition to maintaining the reservation, the Conservancy has a 9 month schedule of free hikes open to the public.**

# Speaker Recap

By Marge Martin and Norman Lee

## August 10: Networking with LinkedIn

**LinkedIn** is a business-oriented social networking site used mainly for professional networking. As of August 9, 2010, LinkedIn had more than 75 million registered users, spanning more than 200 countries and territories worldwide.

**Denise Ford Sawadogo** gave a presentation on the basics of using LinkedIn. Going online, she demonstrated how to develop a profile that included posting your photo and key points from your resume. She showed how to search for jobs and business opportunities and explained how job seekers can review the profile of hiring managers and discover which of their existing contacts can introduce them.

PSGWC members can contact any of the IT committee members for help with developing their profile and with getting answers to LinkedIn questions.

## August 17: Resumes on Microsoft Word

**Steve Cohen's** presentation topic was on how to format your resume on **Microsoft Word** in an efficient manner. He spoke about the differences between a "healthy" and an "unhealthy" formatted resume. By using the hide/unhide function, (Control Shift \*) the viewer can see any extra key returns or unnecessary spaces in the document – an unhealthy resume. Steve gave tips and advice on how to eliminate and correct these common errors. Once a section is correctly formatted, he then showed a function called "Paragraph Formatting", which is a shortcut to format other sections so that any additional sections will have the same look and feel – a healthy document.

## August 24: Where the Jobs Are...and Not

**John Ehret** from the **NJ DOL** in Trenton showed the PSGWC online tools that zero in

on the status of New Jersey's current labor market. Mr. Ehret demonstrated use of the system to spot where the job shortages are, how much jobs are paying, and what credentials are needed for specific positions. The statistics underlying the system are now used by the DOL to target their training dollars rather than allowing individuals to waste efforts on programs for jobs that have already attracted more workers than needed. You can access this database at <http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/content/RealTimeJobsinDemand.html>.

A second key resource offered jobseekers at the DOL website is their database of current local job requisitions at <http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/wnpjpin/findjob/findjobindex.html> (click on One-Stop Job Postings).

## August 31, Mortgage Seminar for the Unemployed Homeowner

PSGWC member **Verna Prioleau** hosted a mortgage seminar that served as a question and answer forum for homeowners struggling to keep up with payments due to the recession and unemployment. The discussion focused on government-assisted and in-house lender programs that could benefit the homeowner and avert foreclosure.

Programs discussed included:

### *Lender Programs*

- Traditional Loan Modification (modification done in-house by the mortgage company)

### *Government Home Assisted Programs*

- **HAMP**=Home Affordable Mortgage Program (loan modification program)
- **HAUP**=Homeowner Assistance Unemployed Program (temporary forbearance while unemployed)
- **HAFSA**=Homeowner Affordable Foreclosure Alternative (short sale of property when there is no equity)

The seminar was well received by the audience and was quite interactive.

*Continued on page 5*

When updating your resume, make a brief and concise profile paragraph on the top of the first page of your resume which states the important elements of your career BRAND.

## September 7: Networking for Succe\$\$

**Paul Dube's** talk about online and in-person networking stressed helping others so as to nurture long-term relationships. Don't think of networking as something you do just at meetings that have been set up specifically for networking opportunities. Instead, be on your game wherever you are—you never know if who you meet next will be your next co-worker or manager. Seek to network in multifaceted groups rather than groups of similar professionals (your competition) and



**Paul Dube reviews new ways job seekers can use the website LinkedIn.**

groups of unemployed workers. Offer help, and ask for help.

Dube reviewed how to use **LinkedIn** to ask for recommendations and suggested downloading the LinkedIn Browser Toolbar that integrates LinkedIn functionality when using other websites. The toolbar can be downloaded at: [http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=tools&trk=hb\\_ft\\_tools](http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=tools&trk=hb_ft_tools). [Editor's note: you'll find other interesting LinkedIn tools at [http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=application\\_directory&trk=hb\\_side\\_apps](http://www.linkedin.com/static?key=application_directory&trk=hb_side_apps)]

In addition to LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, Dube advised visiting <http://www.thevirtualhandshake.com/map.html/> for listings of other online networking alternatives and for a download of a (free) book on social networking (**"The Virtual Handshake: Opening Doors and Closing Deals Online"**). [www.Xing.com](http://www.Xing.com) and [www.Viadeo.com](http://www.Viadeo.com) were recommended [Editor's note: these appear to be LinkedIn clones with limited ac-

tivity. Experience for your individual industry may vary.]

You can read more about Dube at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/pdube>.

## September 14: Stressless Approach to Networking

Coach **Randy Nathan** identified Time ("waste of time"; "takes too long"), Perception ("cost"; "dislike"), and Skills ("don't know how"; "shy/introvert"; "not accountable") as three key obstacles to networking that we can overcome with learned skills. Some simple solutions explored for addressing these obstacles include:

- Have a clear focus and direction (e.g., elevator speech).
- Be open to new venues and approaches.
- Start small and concentrate on people who know people.
- Share your passion.
- Pay it forward.

Now is the time to change how you have been networking if your current approach has not been working. Continuing to do what you have been doing will likely continue to deliver the same (lack of) results!

You can read more about Nathan's coaching resources at <http://www.projectnextgen.com/>.

## September 21: Finances while in Transition

**Jared Traum** helped PSGWCers get a handle on action steps for addressing changes in their financial situation. Ideas for cutting current expenses included:

- Swapping credit to a new, lower rate, card by contacting the credit company and asking for a revision. If necessary, move the debt to a new vendor.
- Reducing spouse's 401(k) deferrals temporarily (but not below the rate that attracts an employer match if at all feasible).
- Increasing insurance policy deductibles after considering the risks of self insuring the increased amount (auto; home-owners)
- Re-evaluating life insurance needs and rates with your agent; and evaluating

*Continued on page 6*

---

**Now is the time to change how you have been networking if your current approach has not been working.**

policy cash values.

- Considering critical illness insurance, particularly if employer-provided COBRA benefits are not available.

Most importantly, PSGWCers need to have a clear understanding of what they are spending so that they can evaluate choices and be organized. Write down agreed expenditures and be accountable to someone else such as your spouse.

Jared can be contacted at [jtraum@finsvcs.com](mailto:jtraum@finsvcs.com).

**Most importantly, PSGWCers need to have a clear understanding of what they are spending so that they can evaluate choices and be organized.**

## September 28: Likeability and Storytelling

Likeable **Bill Graham** told stories to demonstrate the point that people make choices based on whether or not they like you. Presented with two otherwise equally qualified candidates, a hiring manager will choose the one that he likes. Likeability comes down to 55% face and body language, 38% sound of voice, and 7% actual words.

So what does it take to be likeable? Don't set up walls—take them down with very specific approaches:

- Use an open helpful caring face – as if talking to a newborn.
- Use eye contact with raised brows to communicate an open and helpful attitude
- Speak with a warm voice.



**Speaker Bill Graham uses PSGWC members to make a point about avoiding defensive postures.**

- Position yourself with an open posture (no crossed arms, “fig leaf pose”, hands behind back).
- Avoid noise when pausing (“um”, “ah”).
- Be helpful. Listen for needs (add “that will help me to” to every question they ask to help you focus on them rather than on being judged).

Tell a story and be memorable. The recipe for a story is to:

- Set up a high stakes situation.
- Know what the main character wants.
- Make the audience care.
- Describe the life-changing moment.
- Make the story helpful for your audience.

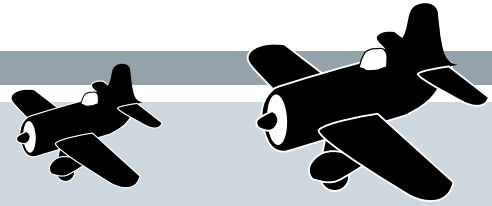
Check out Graham's website and LinkedIn profile at [www.grahamcc.com](http://www.grahamcc.com) and <http://www.linkedin.com/in/grahamcc>.

## PSGWC Back to Work Program Graduates Second Class



The **PSGWC Back to Work** program has graduated a second group of participants. The program teaches PSGWC members more effective strategies to find the right job. Back row, Lynn Osborne, Tom Rubineti, Denise Ford Sawadogo, Steve Cohen and Maria Benedykcinski. Front row, Michele Woodson, Joanne Schreyer and Avery Dykman

# LANDINGS



Congratulation to the following PSGWC members who have recently landed in either permanent or contract positions. We wish you the best of luck in your new position.

## **The Job Seeking Odyssey of Lou Nocito**

I have landed a position after 19 months of looking. I started Monday, October 11th.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support during this era of my life. I am sure it would have happened regardless but having people there who understand what it's like and what one is going through is more helpful than any class or lecture. I have made many connections and more than a few friends through the PSGWC. Thanks again.

So what advice can a veteran job-seeker offer ?? Just keep at it. Work your network, troll the job boards and keep the best attitude you can. There are jobs out there for all of us. Not to plug the PSGWC (warning, plug on its way) but I truly do believe that involvement, not just attendance but INVOLVEMENT, added greatly to my ability to find work as well as helping to keep my skills fresh. I'm not just talking about my computer skills either. I mean my people skills and my presentation skills. So step up, become an active member, join and work with a committee, you always help yourself by helping others.

Okay, off the soapbox. Thanks again.

Best of all things,  
**Lou Nocito**

## **Craig Hamilton Thanks the PSGWC for Helping Him Land**

"Good morning. Craig Hamilton. A Corporate Banking Professional experienced in current Financial Regulatory Reform requirements as well as Asset Liability Management, Allowance for Loan Losses, as well as Loan Portfolio Stress Testing. I am also registered licensed Architect/Engineer and Professional Planner by profession. Craig Hamilton."

Over the last two weeks I have interviewed with two financial institutions. The first interviews were with the hiring manager at one and the HR Exec at the other. Both said I might be over-qualified for the positions at hand but they were interested in what I might be able to bring to their institutions. As I conveyed in our last "Championship Meeting", my response was-

"In this era of financial regulatory reform with zealous bank examiners, over-qualified just might be an asset. Specifically, I made the analogy as follows- "If I were a Special

Ops Combat soldier and had to be inserted into a hostile environment by an Apache Helicopter pilot...would I want the pilot who is responsible for putting me on the ground from a tether rope to be qualified or over-qualified? OVER would be my choice!"

As a result, this past week I had two follow-up interviews with the Presidents and Boards of Directors of these two financial institutions. It was truly a "Shall We Dance" moment for me! Stressing indeed! Particularly, when the one institution sent me an offering letter on my Blackberry when I was interviewing with the Board of the other company. So what can I share with you all in retrospect?

**(1)** The PSGWC-NJDOL structure WORKS and its continuance is crucial to redeploying the talented professionals who participate. Our facilitators Jill, Teddy, Alain, and Laurie, have been instrumental to my success, as well as, eventually all of your own successes to come!

**(2)** As much as we have learned how to put ourselves out there on "LinkedIn", "FaceBook" etc....etc.; "be cautious on listing position titles, employers, etc." You all may need to tweak your CV's depending upon the job opportunity, and putting it "OUT-THERE" may limit your opportunities. As they say- "KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID!" Because once it's out there- it's out there!

**(3)** Without reverence; participate, contribute, and put your efforts into the PSGWC-NJDOL program. It Works! And, telling a prospective employer what you have been doing while in transition DOES impress them! (better than watching "Days of Our Lives" and eating potato chips). I like Wise's w/ Kringles!

**(4)** Research and Research your opportunities before going into the interview.

And finally-

**(5)** The "Heavens" do listen! Keep the faith in whatever denomination of your choice! It might take time but, patience, persistence, and perseverance are omnipotent! The Heavens do listen!

Who makes it happen? YOU DO! Each and every one of you! I start my new chapter this Monday, October 18th.

Ciao, G\_d Bless, Mazel Tov, and Best to all!

**Craig**

## Volunteering at the PSGWC

Sponsored by the **New Jersey Department of Labor**, the **Professional Services Group (PSG)** is a voluntary self-help organization for unemployed professionals dedicated to helping its member become employed. Located at **Essex County College**, the PSGWC offers its members: a constructive environment of like-minded and like-situated professionals; free access to phones, fax machines, copiers, computers and internet access; job leads; workshop and seminars presented by PSGWC or Guest Speakers on a variety of topics relating to job seeking skills; guidance and support from the Department of Labor in the form of additional programs conducted by the state and county and much more.

All these good services are made possible by the voluntary services of its members thru various committees. Please talk to one of the committee chairpersons and join a committee of interest so that the PSGWC continues to grow while expanding on the services mentioned above. Committees include:

- **Speakers & Presentation—Dan Cuoco:** Obtains and schedules professional presenters.
- **IT/Tech Support—Sheryll Reid:** Aids members in basic job seeking technology tools.
- **Job Leads—Lynn Osborne:** Sets the parameter for obtaining and distributing job leads.
- **Job Search Skills—Denise Ford Sawadogo:** Educates members on the basic of job seeking via various seminars and presentations in resume writing, interviewing, elevator pitch, etc.
- **Membership/Marketing—Guy Demuro:** The face of the PSGWC to the outside world; ensures smooth assimilation of new members and provides a repository of member data for various internal and external use.
- **Newsletter—Norman Lee:** Inform, educate and inspire via a monthly newsletter regarding career and job transition strategies.

**Joining the PSGWC is a two-way street - in order to receive, you must contribute! Please join and share in your expertise and interest. It looks good on a resume and helps answer the question, "So, what have you been doing while you were looking for a job? "**

# Happy Holidays!

## Credits

**Managing Editor:** Norman Lee

**Contributors:** Paul Belci, Lauren Centrella, Steve Cohen, Lidia Hill, Alyson Librizzi, Marge Martin, Steve Wilson

## New Members

**Arlene Cairns**  
**Barbara Cawi**  
**Terry Crumbley**  
**Linda Dandridge**  
**Barbara Davey**  
**Seph Gordon**  
**Melissa Grace Hallock**  
**Robert Maclay**  
**Terry Madden**  
**Carol Massenburg**  
**Bob McGee**  
**Beverly Miller**  
**Carla Murphy**  
**Brian Oliver**  
**Jeannine Pond**  
**Roy Richards**  
**Cynthia Vallario**  
**Debra Whitlock**  
**Lisa Zhng**

### PSGWC Needs List

Let us know if you are able to secure any of these items on behalf of the PSGWC

- Laptop or Desktop Computer
- Digital Video Camera
- Computer Speakers
- Kensington Computer Lock
- Hard Drives
- Monitors