

## **Survival Plan 2009 - part two**

No panicking now. Only three months of job finding time left. Don't do anything desperate, keep to your plan. If you are keeping your eye on the press the good news is that the job market has picked up and some good career opportunities are starting to surface.

I predict that the most opportunistic companies will start recruiting now for the upturn next year or alternately wait for February to start recruiting for the new financial year. Either way I think that there certainly is urgency in the market to find good staff and you should not give up looking for work.

In the last article of "Survival Plan 2009 - part one" we covered using recruiters and your personal network to find work. This time round we are going to identify some of the traits best associated with small companies and how this impacts you selling yourself directly rather than through a third party.

Understanding the size of the business you want to work in will certainly impact your strategy and ultimately the success or failure of your sales plan. You should have already identified in the planning section of your CV for Life plan, the type of corporate culture you wish to work in, which will then determine the size of business you target.

I believe that most people that move into a new role do so without knowing what type of business personality suites theirs (corporate culture). You may however not have worked before and still need to find this out, you can still make a list of your values and aspire to work in an environment that will suite you best. Let's identify the typical recruitment practices of both small and large companies. This should assist you when putting together the execution of your sales plan.

Most small business (SMME'S) owners will not have the money to spend on recruitment fees or large scale national advertising. So most of these business owners will revert to their local newspapers or provincial newspapers and the internet or word of mouth to advertise vacancies. Your sales and promotions strategy should therefore accommodate for this target market accordingly.

One of the quickest ways to identify if a company is advertising directly versus using a recruiter, is to look at the e-mail of the person taking the response of the media or internet advertisement. Does the e-mail address contain the companies name in the URL. If so chances are your CV will be screened by the actual company not a recruiter. This is also a good way to see what the name of the company is that you are applying to thereby assisting you to research the company properly.

Always do research on the company you are applying to on the internet before sending your CV. Using internet sites, screening local newspapers and speaking with friends about your availability would therefore be a priority when looking for work in these types of companies.

I also recommend downsizing your CV slightly as often if an owner is taking response from an advertisement he or she will have less time to read through a CV therefore keep it short. For the very bold candidate you can also, as mentioned before study e-mail address in the advertisement. Track the respondent company and make a direct approach on that party that has advertise. Sometimes you can make a very good impression especially for a sales type role. But you didn't get that advice from me.

I always recommend to graduates that you need to keep an open mind regards what size of business you want to work for. Most graduates I believe think only large companies look for their entry level type skills. As a graduate you will gain excellent generalist skills in smaller environment.

In comparison the larger company is often overlooked as fortress of impregnability. Most people looking for work assume that large companies will never take your candidacy into consideration if you make a direct approach - wrong. Most companies loath spending money on recruitment and try every trick in the book to avoid the pain of this cost.

The problem of course is with so many unemployed people in the market place large companies are often overwhelmed especially when recruitment processes and affirmative action come into play, once again do your research properly and never assume.

Larger companies or businesses with a Human Resources Manager will have invested money in this skill for a reason. The most obvious is the overwhelming or over complicated process that has become apparent in that company necessitating the requirement to have somebody manage the actual recruitment process. So you can therefore assume exactly that - lots of processes and policy - just what HR Managers are good at.

Large companies generally today also employ automate recruitment tools especially focusing on the internet. HR manager often suggest using mass advertising to save money and by implication then encourage a high degree of Human Resource Manager contact.

Generally the less experience you have working and the more desperate you are the more channels you should employ to find work. For all types of people looking for work the use of the personal network is a must. This is an easy to use and very quick way to promote your CV into the market it is also a channel that can be used by graduates and executive effectively.

For me using media and e-recruitment is a must and often these are conglomerated together. This type of channel can be used with little effort if you have your information prepared and your admin skills honed. A definite must.

If you are really pressed for time or have planned for a less aggressive approach in finding work using recruiters and companies direct are optional.

I must however emphasis that I do recommend using all the above channels in some way possible to promote for CV.