

Notes from BWA Meeting, January 22, 2008

Speaker: *Tracy Laswell Williams, a certified job and career transition coach as well as an accredited resume writer. She is founder of CAREER-Magic.com, a resume and job search firm that has helped individuals search for the perfect job since 1994. Complete descriptions of her services and workshops can be found at www.career-magic.com. You can read more about Tracy on her Linked-In bio at www.linkedin.com/in/tracylaswell. Tracy has run the Caffeinated Careers Club for eight years. [View presenter's handouts](#).*

Tracy suggests that you approach a networking event with a clear goal and a message that is clear, concise, and compelling. It's better to work at finding out more about the other person than rush to tell them about you. It's good to practice on friends to see if your message comes across. Be sure to end your message with your request for help.

Where to network: Everywhere! Here at BWA, with your neighbors, at formal networking events. Everybody knows someone you need to know. At events, don't ask "What do you do?" Instead, ask "Have you seen any good movies recently? Have you read anything good lately?" Have these questions at the tip of your tongue and you'll be schmoozing!

When to network: All the time except when sleeping or too depressed to keep your spirits up. Don't disconnect from networking activities when you get a job; always be networking. Go with the "giving first" attitude and stay in touch. It's always about relationships.

Phone calls: If you are connected and have a name, title, and a phone number from someone else, and you have a positive script, you can make phone calls. Stand up to make calls so you get more oxygen to your lungs. Smile -- have a mirror at your desk. Have an objective, get to the point, thank them, get off the phone. Don't take more than 5 minutes. Be nice to the gatekeepers. Leave a voice mail message if necessary, but make it short (under 30 seconds; repeat your name and phone number at the end; say something perky).

Online: Use the computer as a communication tool, second to personal contact because:

1. Computers don't hire people.
2. E-mail doesn't always get through.

It's great to supplement with online. Plaxo is a contact manager similar to LinkedIn (MySpace for grownups; possibly 15,000,000 members). Another resources is IContact; also consider Yahoo groups.

She recommends LinkedIn; create a profile and connect to other professionals. It doesn't cost anything for the first level (there is a more expensive membership).

Why use LinkedIn:

1. Recruiters love it. They feel candidates are one step above Monster.com.
2. It's better for being found for business opportunities.
3. Use it for researching and finding clients.

How Tracy says to use LinkedIn:

1. Make your profile as key-word intensive as possible (your resume on steroids).
2. Put your e-mail or phone number in your profile (although LinkedIn says not to do this).
3. Cultivate your network by linking to people who have a lot of contacts.

Questions:

How is LinkedIn used? You can make closed exclusive groups within Linked In. Say you're in purchasing and you want to find a new source; you can use LinkedIn for that. Having a profile is not the same as having your resume out on Monster (you are not actually job-searching if you're on LinkedIn). Get and give recommendations. Mike O'Neil's Integrated Alliance in Denver provides classes (live and Webinar) on how to use LinkedIn. She doesn't feel she gets any more spam being listed on LinkedIn.

Minutes submitted by Bette Frick, The Text Doctor ®, www.textdoctor.com.