



"As we struggle with shopping lists and invitations, compounded by December's bad weather, it is good to be reminded that there are people in our lives who are worth this aggravation, and people to whom we are worth the same." - Donald E. Westlake

'Tis the Season to Give and Receive

With so much of the holiday season focused on commercialism, it can be difficult for anyone, particularly children to remember the true meaning of the holidays rather than the gifts under the tree. As parents, many of us use the holidays as a time to teach children about giving back and being thankful for what they have.

So as we strive to instill this sense of charity and giving in our younger generation, it is equally important to remind ourselves how to apply that same idea to our own lives! Giving of your resources and offering help is absolutely essential to meeting our own goals, since it is in the giving to others — especially now, during the holidays — that encourages our friends and contacts to assist us when we are in need. The holiday season is the perfect time to remember to be charitable with our time and resources; it won't take long to reap the benefits of our generosity!

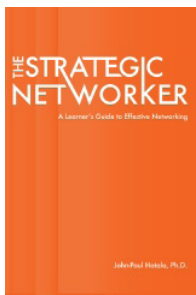
I invite you to continue submitting feedback and/or story ideas you'd particularly like to see in future issues; please do so by sending an email to newsletter@flowork.com. I wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season!

John-Paul Hatala, Ph.D., Flowork Founder



This month's FlowTIP:
Give and you shall receive.
See page 3 for more information.

What's New?



The Strategic Networker: A Learner's Guide to Effective Networking

Dr. Hatala is proud to announce the release of his latest book, The Strategic Networker: A Learner's Guide to Effective Networking. Visit www.flowork.com or your local book store to order you copy today.

Dr. Hatala conducting presentations in Toronto

If your agency purchases ten or more copies of The Strategic Networker and is located in the Greater Toronto Area, Dr. Hatala will personally deliver and conduct a one-hour session on strategic networking for your staff and clients. For more

information please email info@flowork.com.

Flowork Certification Training Coming to Toronto

Flowork is pleased to announce that Dr. Hatala will be delivering the Social Capital Development and Strategic Job Search Management certification program in February 2010 (exact date to be determined). If you're interested, please email us at training@flowork.com and we'll add your name to the waiting list. Details will be provided shortly.



What are you giving your network for the Holiday Season?

It's the season of giving...exchanging gifts with friends and loved ones, donating needed items to a favorite charity, sharing the happiness and joy that comes with this time of the year.

The question is what do you have in mind for your network?

Since social capital development is all about the creation of mutually beneficial relationships, the holiday season is the perfect time to reflect on the past year and see how you were able to give back to your network. It's a time of year when you can take stock of your contributions and whether you were able to equally take as well as give back to the contacts in your network.

This season, take the time to reflect on our network activity and determine whether you have (1) been treated fairly and (2) treated others fairly. More specifically, ask yourself, how have you have tapped into your network over the last year? What goals were accomplished with the help of contacts? Where might you have been lacking in social resources in relation to your goals? The most important question you can ask yourself is whether you have set goals or not.

On the flip side, examine all the opportunities you had to give to your contacts. What social resources where you able to provide the people in your network? Did you pass along a contact name to someone else? What about providing some information or sharing knowledge so that your contacts could accomplish a goal? Most importantly, how often did you sit down with members of your network throughout the year and asked them about their goals?

Take a piece of paper, draw a line down the middle of the page and on the left write the heading 'what I took from my network' and on the left, write 'what I gave my network'. Are both sides equal or is one side heavier then the other? The goal is to find a balance between the two so that you can ensure that you're giving as much as you are taking and vice versa.

The holiday season is a time to give, no question. However, remember that it's also a time to receive. Research suggests that if you're clear

on what you want to accomplish (in other words, you have set distinct goals) and are able to communicate it effectively, you're more likely to run into someone who can help. On the other hand, if you've become aware of what your contacts are trying to accomplish (in other words, you are aware of their goals), you more likely to be in a position to give.

Share your goals and ask your contacts what they're trying to accomplish. You will be surprised at what kind of gifts you will get this holiday season. Of course, the holiday season is not the only time of year that you should be doing this, but the spirit already pervading makes it the opportune time to remember. Take advantage of the festive spirit and tap into your networks. After all, it's the season of giving!



Book Review

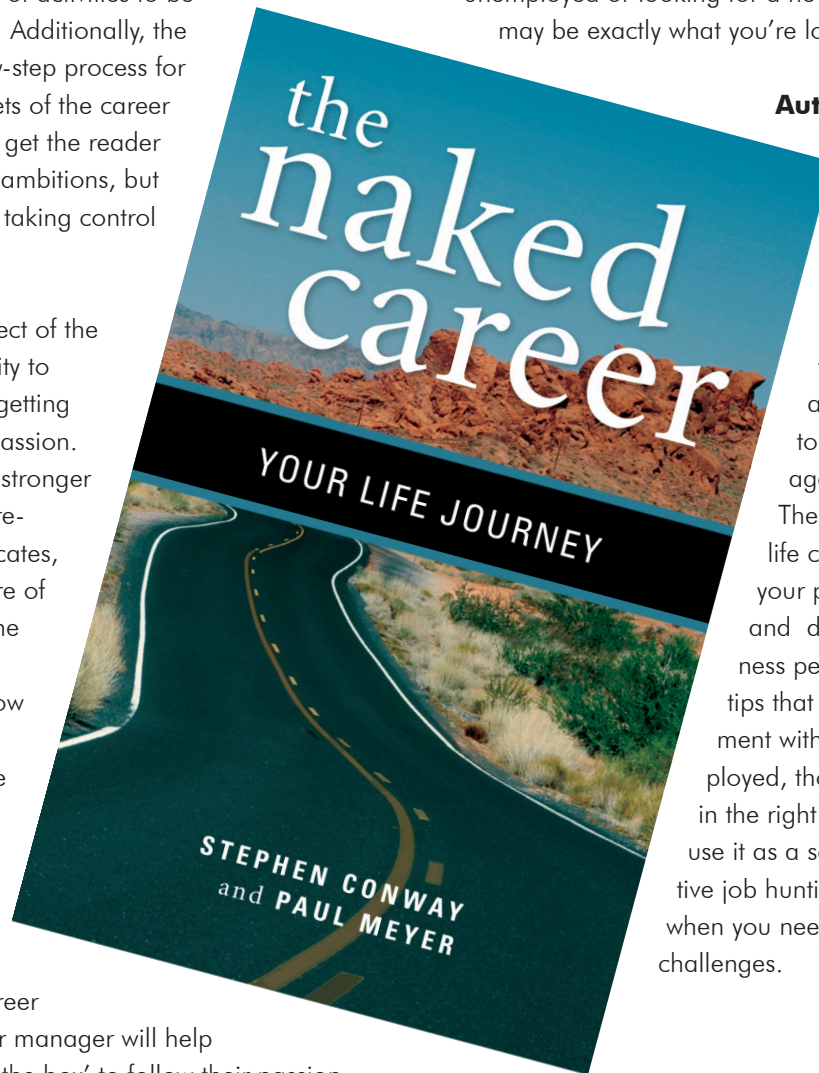
The Naked Career: Your Life Journey by Stephen Conway and Paul Meyer

The Naked Career is a book from New Zealand that provides a structured format for exploring your career path. The book provides a number of activities to be completed by the reader. Additionally, the book illustrates a step-by-step process for examining the many facets of the career journey. Not only does it get the reader to reflect on their career ambitions, but provides action steps for taking control of the process.

The most interesting aspect of the book is the author's ability to refocus the reader from getting a job to following their passion. This approach creates a stronger buy-in to the concepts presented. As the book indicates, if we become more aware of what our passions are, the greater the likelihood to remain motivated to follow a career path that leads us in that direction. More specifically, our passions lead to happiness.

This book is an inspiration and takes a fresh perspective in career development. This career manager will help readers to 'think outside the box' to follow their passion.

Consider investing in this book so that you can get a well-rounded perspective on your career direction. Whether you're unemployed or looking for a new career, the Naked Career may be exactly what you're looking for.



Authors Synopsis:

The Naked Career, a handbook born in NZ out of worldwide experience offers a fresh perspective on career or work choice. It is a breakthrough guide to finding a career that will shape a rewarding life journey. Easy to read and suitable for any age, race, culture or stage of life. The book covers the full career life cycle so that you can maximize your potential through both good and difficult economic times. Business people and employees will find tips that integrate personal development with work success. The unemployed, those unsure whether they are in the right job and younger people will use it as a self direction finder and effective job hunting tool. It is a great resource when you need inspiration or are facing new challenges.

This Month's flowTIP:

Give and you shall receive. It's the time of year to give and receive. This holiday season think about what you can offer your network. The easiest way to do that is to ask your contacts what they tried to accomplish this year and if they still need some help. Once you're clear on their goals, start to think about what social resources (i.e., contacts, information, knowledge) you can provide to help them out. In addition, think about your goals and start to seek out help so that you can accomplish them. After all, as long as you're willing to give you are in a good position to receive. Tap into the festive season by tapping into your network! The key is to share your social capital wealth to help others and to tap into your own social capital to help yourself.



Unemployed Doesn't Mean Unhappy

by Eileen AJ Connelly, AP Personal Finance Writer

The only bells jingling for many families this season may be the calls from collection agencies.

For the 15.7 million workers unemployed, and perhaps especially for the 5.6 million of those people out of work for six months or more, the holidays present a host of challenges. There's the issue of money for gifts and all the other elements of the season. There's the temptation to slack off on job hunting until the New Year, fueled by the false belief that "no one hires during the holidays." And there's the pressure to celebrate when it may seem there's little to be happy about.

"I hate to say this, but Christmas to me right now is just a date in the calendar," said Jeff Brown, a Phoenix resident who has been hunting for a new job since a June 2008 layoff.

Even in prosperous years, the holiday season sends some people into a funk. But it's possible to enjoy the season when you're unemployed, and even make it work to your advantage.

Don't be a Grinch

Last year at this time, Brown, 57, recalls entering "major panic mode," as it became clear he'd need more than just a few months to replace the executive sales job he held for more than nine years.

He turned to his wife, Judy, for support. They took out the decorations, even though Judy was initially thinking about skipping that ritual. The couple shared small gifts, and tried to count their blessings. "We were closer last year on Christmas than we ever have been, even though we had much less," Brown said. "Because we truly realized we had each other."

It's been another year without work - except for a 70-day stint as the director of business operations for a small company, which ended in a second layoff when revenue dropped off. That spot paid less than half the \$100,000 plus commission that his former position paid. He's now earning just \$11 an hour working a part-time job at a retailer, which offers irregular hours and doesn't produce nearly enough to pay the bills. Their credit cards are maxed out, and the bill collectors are calling.

"There's no Santa list this year," said Brown, who has two grown children, both of whom live in other states. "I have to find some other ways to make it happen for me."

Setting realistic expectations is key to making the season a happy one. When you're out of work, that means finding ways to celebrate the holidays that rely more on sharing experiences than on spending.

The Browns will spend time with neighbors and friends, and do some volunteer work at their church. Judy, who is self-employed as a personal assistant and caregiver for two elderly men, also plans to donate a turkey to the local homeless shelter, despite their tight funds. "I can fit \$7.50 in my budget," she said.

Strike when the competition slacks

It's a myth that no jobs get filled during the last six weeks of the year, said Marc Cenedella, CEO of TheLadders.com, a job search site that advertises \$100,000-a-year positions. In fact, pounding the pavement now may make the difference between starting 2010 settling into a new position and competing for one.

"I can tell you as an absolute fact that January is the busiest job hunting time of the year," said Tony Lee, publisher of CareerCast.com. The people who are hired in January are usually those who applied and interviewed in prior months. "You don't hire somebody on Jan. 5 that you met on Jan. 3, you hire somebody you met in November or December," Lee said.

Companies with open jobs will often push to fill them before year end, especially if there is any concern about losing positions in next year's budget. Moreover, recruiters and hiring managers would like to end what's been a "dreadful year" on a positive note, Cenedella said.

Since other job hunters will take a holiday break, the competition is reduced. "Strike while they're on the sofa watching the Lions game," Cenedella said.

Brown spends about two to three hours a day on his job search. He regularly puts time into networking, which he believes is the key to finding a new spot.

While fighting his panic during the holidays last year, Brown was also inspired to reach out to others who share his predicament. He and Judy organized a group through their church to provide support and encouragement for people who are unemployed. It offers workshops addressing both practical issues, like resume preparation and finances while unemployed, and the emotional aspects of job hunting. More than 125 displaced workers took part this year, about 10 percent of whom have gotten jobs, Brown said.

That sort of effort can also help make things brighter in difficult times. "When we started this group, we didn't know if we would have one person show up," Judy said. "It was very rewarding."

Flowork offers the benefits of social capital to anyone of any age. The Education Flowork Program offers educational institutions (Kindergarten through higher education) to ensure their students, faculty and staff become aware of the power of information by networking. Corporate Flowork and the Flowork Workforce Development Program introduces corporations, non-profit organizations, government, and workforce development groups to ways they might increase the flow of information between individuals, departments, divisions and units. Floworks founder Dr. John-Paul Hatola is available for speaking engagements nationwide. If you are interested in booking him for an on-site speaking engagement, please call us at 1-877-flowork or visit www.flowork.com and click "contact us" to discuss your needs.



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