

CareerSmart Advisor™

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

A Note From Dave

Given that the average age of ExecuNet's membership is 49 and we have been around for 18+ years, we have been long-engaged in the dialogue about age. A recent "flash survey" confirmed there was still some good news and bad news on the age front.



The good news was that while 63 percent of the respondents said that age discrimination is a serious problem in today's executive employment market, the percentage was down from 77 percent in 2004 and 82 percent in September of 2003.

I suspect the dip is tied to both the economic cycle (the economy is lots better now than in '03) and the War for Talent demographics that may be starting to kick in.

I would also like to think that there is also a piece of this that speaks to the "education" of organizations who are discovering that if they don't take advantage of the experience offered by the over 50 cohort, they are shooting themselves in the foot on any number of levels.

Even if we can't ascribe some of this change to an epiphany on the part of employers, maybe it is just pragmatism coming from such factual realities that have been shared by such luminaries as Tom Peters who quoted some stats from David Wolfe and Robert Snyder's book *Ageless Marketing*: the new customer majority was the age group of 44-65, and this group was 45 percent bigger than the 18-43 segment and would be 60 percent bigger than that group by 2010.

Whatever the case, the facts seem to support two things: age discrimination is alive and well; and the revenge of the gray panthers, at least for the foreseeable future, may be taking shape.

Sincerely,

Dave

Dave Opton
ExecuNet Founder & CEO
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What's Driving Your Career?

By Robyn Greenspan

The obvious answer isn't always "paycheck," as legions of executives step outside their financial comfort zones to take jobs that are closer to home, afford more family time, or present assignments with more challenge and potential.

According to ExecuNet's market intelligence, compensation appears last on the list of reasons why executives are planning to leave their current job this year, and is ranked third among the important factors for accepting a new position. But while salary was cited as one of the chief reasons for rejecting an offer, it trailed behind "level of opportunity/challenge and personal growth potential."

The values we assign to the factors that propel us through our professional careers can be as individual as our fingerprints. Two executives in the same roles will derive satisfaction from different sources, and sometimes talent management can be as simple as identifying and understanding an employee's primary driver and then finding the best position to channel that interest.

Reasons for Leaving Current Job in Next Six Months

Personal	30%
<i>Limited advancement opportunities; lack of challenge/personal growth</i>	
External.....	26%
<i>Company/industry prospects not favorable; job security</i>	
Atmosphere	22%
<i>Differences with culture; boss is not a good match</i>	
Lifestyle	11%
<i>Work/life balance; volume of business travel; commute</i>	
Compensation	11%

Source: ExecuNet, 2006

Career Anchors

Edgar H. Schein, Sloan Fellows Professor of Management Emeritus at the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has studied the influence of "Career Anchors" on job planning; and he presented his research to the Association of Career

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FastTrack Programs —
May 2006
Hosted by Dave Opton,
founder and CEO, ExecuNet

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- 5/24 — **Winning Interviews: Converse, Connect, Convince** — Judy Rosemarin
- 5/25 — **Seven Steps to a Great Executive Resume** — Louise Kursmark
- 5/25 — **How to Land the Job You Want When You're Over 50** — Jean Walker

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- 5/16 — **Irvine, CA (Orange County)** — Mark James
- 5/16 — **Wilmington, DE** — Russ Dunn & Rick Hays
- 5/17 — **Philadelphia Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Ed Kelleher
- 5/17 — **Philadelphia** — Ed Kelleher
- 5/18 — **Southern Wisconsin** — Clara Hurd Nydam
- 5/18 — **Minneapolis** — John Wetzel & Barbara Adams
- 5/18 — **Washington, DC** — Peter McCarthy
- 5/22 — **Orlando/Maitland** — Gina Hall
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- 5/25 — **Dallas** — Bob Hueglin
- 5/25 — **Palo Alto, CA** — Linda Holroyd
- 4/26 — **St. Louis** — Jim Clarkson
- 5/25 — **Detroit Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Marge Larsen
- 5/31 — **Portland** — Jean Walker

Registration information can be found at members.execunet.com/e_network_results.cfm

:: Noteworthy

The New Leader's 100-Day Action Plan: Yes, You Have a Vested Interest

By Joseph Daniel McCool

Much in the same way the media passes judgment on a new President, the extent to which you can successfully integrate into the fabric, culture and social dynamic of a new employer organization — regardless of how closely you match the position requirements — will hinge largely on the impressions you make within your first 100 days on the job.

And the livelihoods of those involved in your promotion or recruitment to that new executive-level job also depend on whether you can hit the ground running or crash and burn because you failed to learn about the human elements that drive your new constituencies.

Yes, executive-level job candidate, you have a serious vested interest in executive on-boarding. That's because while a lot of companies do a good job attracting, recruiting and hiring outstanding executives, many fail to successfully integrate them into their organizational culture. That often leads to a resignation or a bad start that ends in an awkward and costly firing — and comes back to haunt both you and the recruiter, regardless of how well you think you performed in your first months in the new role.

George Bradt knows better, and so

should you. The founder of executive integration firm PrimeGenesis in Stamford, CT, Bradt is now also the author of the just-released book, *The New Leader's 100-Day Action Plan: How To Take Charge, Build Your Team, And Get Immediate Results* (Wiley, 2006). This is a practical guidebook for executives and those who hire them about navigating the potentially treacherous waters of an executive-level transition.

Some of the key takeaways for those scouting out executive-level job opportunities:

- You should ask the recruiter and others within the employer organization for their assessment of key stakeholders in your performance — at some point before your official start date. Also, you should assume your duties only after you've mapped out how you will spend your time achieving goals on your first day, during your first few weeks, and throughout your first 100 days on the job. Identifying early wins is critical to your success in the role.
- Ask those involved in your recruitment or promotion about how much discretion you'll have in mobilizing your team. That is, what authority will you be granted to support people who are in the right role and

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Joseph Daniel McCool is the senior contributing editor with ExecuNet and a widely recognized expert on issues related to executive-level recruiting, management succession and leadership development.

Joe previously worked for eight years as editor of *Executive Recruiter News*, published by Kennedy Information Inc., a subsidiary of the Bureau of National Affairs Inc., and he created and produced the Executive Search Summit. He has become the world's most widely quoted analyst of the global business of executive search consulting and its role in management succession; and he is a frequent and repeat guest speaker and occasional keynoter at conferences addressing issues of executive-level recruiting, management succession, executive career transition, and corporate recruiting best practices around the world.

Learnings from Landings

Self-Awareness, Networking and Recruiter Contact Leads to Success

This 53-year old member describes how he made a passive job search into an active endeavor, resulting in a director position in approximately six months. With a blend of optimism, confidence, strategy and the “nuggets that paid dividends along the way,” he shares how he landed in a \$740 million North American company.

Q ■ What techniques or strategies worked for you?

A ■ It was through a fellow associate and client that I was made aware of this opportunity. So letting people know if you are passively or actively searching for a new or different opportunity is very important. Also, as it is so often mentioned, networking.

Secondly, staying in communication with your point of contact (recruiter), keeping them apprised of changes, and results of interviews. After all, the recruiter, although paid by the client, should have a vested interest in your success once they have forwarded your credentials to the hiring company. Your success is their success.

Q ■ What mistakes would you tell people to avoid?

A ■ To lose faith because search firms, recruiters, etc., more times than not, are terrible at communications. You shouldn't allow any disappointment or “no news” deter you from being positive and looking at each and every opportunity as a positive event.

Companies I've interviewed with or had at least a telephone interview are interested in enthusiasm. At this stage and level of career, they don't expect you to come across as if you just got out of college or are eager to participate in a management training program. They want to know that you have done enough research to be able to see yourself as one of their management team members and are excited about the opportunity. First impressions can be lasting.

Q ■ Did anything during the process come as surprise?

A ■ Yes, the recruiter I worked with was one of the most open and honest about their client; knowledgeable about their expectations and requirements and wanted to stay in touch throughout the process. Most search firms — given you rarely ever meet the person you're in contact with — view you as a commodity and not interested in your make up. This was not the case with Wise Executive Resources [the search firm who connected this member with his new opportunity].

Q ■ Was the marketplace what you expected it to be?

A ■ Yes, even though there appears to be a number of openings, it takes time to “land” a position, because of age, last position, past compensation.

Q ■ What did you think about your experiences in interacting with the recruiting community? Any advice you would pass along based on your experience?

A ■ Because of having dealt with a number of them [recruiters] (from nationally known to local or regional), I feel I can convey a true picture of the recruiting community. For the most part they are less than professional, focusing more on production or quick hits than with matching a prospective candidate with an opening.

If the job listing the candidate is interested in is not a fit determined by the company/recruiter, you drop into a void. Even though recruiters say they will keep your qualifications on file, you shouldn't expect them to contact you if another assignment comes their way. Instead, you have to contact them once you see on a website an opening exists

and is being handle be them.

However, there are perhaps 10 percent of the recruiters who are professional and are true to their word. They follow-up, stay in touch and keep you apprised of events. Again, Wise Executive Resources proved to be one of these.

Q ■ What about companies? Any particular differences?

A ■ Clearly, because of 9/11, it is important that you fill out the company's online employment application if you expect to be considered. Not leaving anything to chance, it does not hurt to also send a letter with your CV/résumé to someone “inside” you know will either be the hiring person or will forward it to the proper individual. Like the marketplace, you need to be patient, yet persistent by following up with a phone call or letter of inquiry.

Q ■ Did you feel as prepared as you expected to be?

A ■ I've found that no matter how much I feel I'm prepared there is always an interview question or interview process that is different than others. So, whether using SOARs [situation, objective, action, result] and/or various forms of résumés or bios, you should expect that you may not be fully prepared, and that it's okay. After all, finding your next job is a learning/discovery process for both parties. Like business, selling yourself requires adaptation, flexibility and awareness of your surroundings.

Q ■ Did things go as quickly as you expected or not?

A ■ Fortunately it did, perhaps because the qualifications and requirements were a close match.

Q ■ If you were to advise a fellow member to do only

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Professionals (ACP) International conference held at the end of April in Boston.

“With work experience, a person develops a career anchor, which is a culmination of what they are good at, what they are motivated by, and their values,” noted Schein.

Schein’s research focuses on eight motivators, and an individual’s work life will often reveal one of them as the common thread throughout their careers. Essentially, it is the single item that can’t be compromised for an individual to achieve complete professional satisfaction. “It is the one thing you would not give up if asked to make a career choice,” Schein said at the conference.

Finding Your Anchor

Career anchors are determined through a simple 40-item self-assessment test using a 4-point rating system that allows you to evaluate the importance of specific tasks, feelings and outcomes.

Through the self-scoring diagnostics, an individual can measure values while also identifying technical or general managerial competency and the importance of these motives in relation to career satisfaction. Some examples of the items you will find on the assessment include:

- I dream of having a career that will allow me the freedom to do a job in my own way and on my own schedule.
- I am most fulfilled in my work when I feel that I have complete financial and employment security.
- Working on problems that are difficult to solve is more important to me than achieving a high-level managerial position.
- Using my talents to make the world a better place to live is what drives my career decisions.

Schein says that while a person’s career may seem like a random display of roles, responsibilities and industries, the “whys” are likely to be consistent. Assessing one’s internal career, says Schein, gives “a subjective sense of where

Reading and Resources by Edgar H. Schein

- Career Anchors: Self Assessment
- Career Anchors: Facilitator’s Guide Package
- Career Anchors: Discovering Your Real Values
- Career Survival: Strategic Job and Role Planning
- Organizational Culture and Leadership
- The Corporate Culture Survival Guide

they are going in their work life and their role in it.”

Competency Anchors

Technical/Functional Competence: This is the anchor for individuals who score highest in this category, and who derive the most job satisfaction in developing technical skills. When given the choice of whether they would prefer to be CEO or chief engineer, they will choose the role that offers the most technical functionality. Employees who express very high value in this area are often dissatisfied in general management positions.

General Managerial competence: Those who have expressed high competency in this area are most likely looking for roles that allow them to develop teams, contribute to strategy planning, and work toward the overall goals and success of the organization. These individuals are driven by responsibility, accountability, and are fueled by emotional competence and agility.

Motivational Anchors

Autonomy/Independence: Employees who are self-driven and have identified this as their highest-scored anchor will have difficulty working in highly structured or micromanaged environments. They thrive when they create their own schedules and can define their own work habits.

Security/Stability: Job tenure among executives may have slipped to under three years, but individuals who are anchored by security and stability will likely remain at their desks for much longer. Loyal to company, finances or geography, these individuals may cede responsibility and advancement for steadiness.

Entrepreneurial Creativity: These individuals may be working for others, but they are drawn to owning their own

business. Schein says the need is so strong, they will often tolerate many failed attempts in their search for entrepreneurial success.

Service/Dedication to a Cause: Employees who identify this motivation within themselves will endlessly work to make the world a better place. They flourish in service-oriented environments or they look to imprint a spirit of helpfulness to their role.

“

With work experience, a person develops a career anchor, which is a culmination of what they are good at, what they are motivated by, and their values.

”

Pure Challenge: While not a direct reflection of values, this anchor takes personality and problem-solving abilities into consideration. Individuals who place high importance on this anchor are motivated by finding the possibility in impossibility, whether it is sales, strategy, engineering, or any other role that has a high degree of difficulty.

Lifestyle: “The lifestyle anchor is becoming more important to workers,” Schein observes. “Dual-career families often force individuals to choose a lesser important anchor or family, and lifestyle can moderate the more important anchors.” High scoring on this anchor indicates a

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strong inclination to make choices that will avail more personal or family time, sometimes at the expense of professional advancement and compensation.

Recognition and Power

Absent from Schein's list, but maybe buried within the other anchors for some individuals, are recognition and power. "We all want to be honored for what we do and who we are," notes coach and ExecuNet networking meeting facilitator Meg Montford of Kansas City-based Abilities Enhanced. "That can only happen when we are recognized. Whether it is among five people or 5,000, some people need the acknowledgement so they can show up in a job and are happy doing it."

Executives who are driven by recognition may opt for a high visibility position over one that fulfills other, but lesser, motivational factors. "If you aren't known, you may not progress," says Montford. "Recognition contributes to the branding process, and this is what the world is all about right now. You have to brand yourself so everyone knows who you are."







"In a capitalistic society, recognition may be the measure of how well you are doing your job," Montford continues.

It is only when something is missing that we then realize its importance. Executives in transition may find power and authority high on their list of motivators when they suddenly don't have it, and consequently, they struggle with the shift. The job search presents a unique opportunity to explore other important motivational factors, which may become equally rewarding.

How Managers Can Leverage Employee Motivators

Once you've identified the fuel for your professional success, you can use the assessments to determine the motivations of your team members. With this knowledge, an emotionally intelligent leader can adapt and adjust roles and responsibilities and therefore maximize

Most Important Factors Affecting Job Acceptance According to Executives

	Age 41-50	Age 51-60	Age 60+
 Salary/Compensation	16%	17%	14%
 Personal Growth Potential	15%	13%	11%
 Better Culture	9%	9%	10%
 Improved Work/Life Balance	8%	8%	5%
 Promotion/Advancement	8%	5%	3%
 Broaden My Skills	5%	4%	3%

Source: ExecuNet, 2006

performance, engagement and satisfaction.

"Career anchors," says Schein, "are a way to provide individuals a process for figuring out their career needs, a process for matching career needs with job elements, and a process for developing new skills for new work."

Even simple communication adjustments will appeal to an employee's core motivation, which will allow for innovative approaches to organizational needs and goals. For example, an employee who displays a high inclination toward stability and security may feel reassured — and therefore more productive — in a transparent environment, particularly if the organization is undergoing apparent changes.

Or, someone with entrepreneurial creativity may just be counting the days at his desk until opening his own shop. An astute manager who solicits new ideas and encourages independent projects from this employee may be able to lengthen retention and increase value.

Job/Role Planning

Schein relates the career anchors to job/role planning, noting that organizations typically do a poor job of communicating how individual contributions meet the needs of the organization. When job descriptions are misleading, inaccurate or incomplete, employees cannot assess whether their core motivators will be met or whether they can effectively perform the job functions.

Schein recommends designing a "role map" — a diagram with the employee in

the center surrounded by upper management, subordinates, peers, customers and other "role senders" who have expectations of the employee. Creating a role map eliminates role ambiguity and not only helps trigger the anchor for the employee, but it also clarifies their functions to the role senders.

"It [the role map] has less to do with the responsibilities and more to do with meeting the needs of the role senders, especially the key stakeholders, such as your boss, peers and subordinates," says Schein.

Unmet Motivators

More than 7-in-10 executives are reportedly leaving their jobs in the next six months, which could be a result of new market opportunities and hiring activity. But greater than half of the executives who responded to an early 2006 ExecuNet survey expressed dissatisfaction in their current jobs, illustrating that there are organizational issues spurring attrition.

Until organizations become more involved in talent management, they won't recognize and adjust for employees' individual motivators. "Employers approach talent development and management as something to increase efficiency and productivity," said Lawrence Goetz, former director of Procter & Gamble, at the ACP International conference. Individuals who have the insight into what they care about can focus on personal career management, which can better ensure that motivations will be met. ■

Your Career Advisor

Mentoring: A Pathway to Executive Development

By Dilip G. Saraf

"A strong mentor/mentee relationship is the basis for forging tomorrow's leaders."

-Jack Welch, Chairman, General Electric (1982-2002)

In today's fiercely competitive business climate, career professionals need every edge that they can get to differentiate themselves from the pack. Today's whirlwind environment in the corporate world is unforgiving; one high-visibility mistake as an up-and-coming executive can permanently scuttle your chances for that corner office. In today's flux, making such a mistake is easy.

So, how does one protect their chances of getting to the top without having to learn by trial and error? One way is to find yourself a mentor to leverage your own learning and confidently move ahead in your career. On its flip side, being a mentor to someone fuels your personal development in ways that is not otherwise possible.

It is often said that the best way to learn something is by being a teacher to someone ready to learn! In today's world, having a strong mentor is critical to one's executive success; simultaneously being an involved mentor to someone virtually guarantees it. The following reasons may explain why:

1. Wisdom comes from learning; it, in turn, comes from experience, which comes from setbacks and failures, not from successes. To minimize your exposure to potentially risky undertakings, someone who has their situational learning already behind them can be invaluable.
2. Being a mentor to someone who can benefit from the process is equally vital to one's personal development. Wisdom comes from having overcome personal adversity. Being a mentor to someone multiplies your exposure to challenging

situations that require making the right choices. You vicariously experience challenges that your mentee shares with you; working through solutions helps your growth as well.

3. In today's corporate world very few companies provide the basic training (leadership bootcamp) for their emerging leaders on how to lead or manage. Their focus is more on the tactical aspects of their jobs: Team building, Sarbanes-Oxley, Six-Sigma, dealing with sexual harassment, and so on. The fundamentals of what a leader is and does are rarely a topic of training these days. So, most learn these basics through trial and error; an expensive way to learn!
4. When someone is in the thick of a situation it is easy to get swept away by its exigent details, get caught up in the slipstream, and land into trouble. If you can get an objective guidance and a perspective, it can help your career.
5. Often, using a sounding board can clarify your thinking in a difficult situation. It is rare to find someone who has the background, the interest, and, simultaneously, the emotional attachment and objectivity to provide that resource on demand.
6. At critical junctures having someone you can trust is key. Trust comes from having worked with someone in a variety of situations and having used their guidance to navigate successfully through difficulty.

Having a mentor and being one yourself can be invaluable to fit this bill.

The Myth of a Single Mentor

It is often serendipitous to find a great mentor. Although it can be true, this expectation of finding one great mentor is compounded by the notion that one mentor will provide all the answers to

your life's problems (professional or personal). It is virtually impossible to find one person who has all the characteristics of being a great mentor and, more importantly, keep that position forever. If this were true, it implies that the mentee is not growing in the process.

As one grows, their needs and perspectives change. It is easy to outgrow even a highly skilled and experienced mentor by focusing on growth and by wanting to learn something constantly.

How Does One Go About Finding a Mentor?

One way is to have not just one but a variety of resources to serve this need. This is your "board of advisors" that provides the perspectives that you respect. No one person provides all the answers, but how you synthesize an answer to your particular dilemma or a challenge depends on how you frame it and how you use the variety of resources you have at your disposal. Another advantage of this model is that you can periodically refresh your "board" as you experience your own growth by bringing in new members and by letting those who have run their course take the back seat. You do not need to "fire" anyone, but just readjust their role in your ongoing needs to incorporate their advice.

How you manage all this requires great personal skill and interpersonal finesse. To be successful in the corporate world, this is a good skill to have anyway. In an ideal situation you could have three to five mentors, each with a completely different perspective. In this mix, it is a good idea to have some gender balance to get a rich perspective across the various members of the "board."

Experience shows that males tend to pick male mentors, whereas females are more open to finding the best person

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available to suit their needs. Some of this may stem from the male-dominated executive ranks in the corporate world.

In situations that are steeped in interpersonal conflicts, a female perspective is often considered vital in fully exploring the many dimensions of such relationships.

In critical situations, where you feel that a good advice is central to making the right decision, it should not be surprising to have a great degree of convergence among otherwise diverse personalities and their suggestion on how you might want to move ahead.

An ideal person serving on this “board” (even if you have just one mentor) provides value not by giving you the right answers, but by asking the right questions. To many, this may sound contrarian to the mentoring concept. They hold that a mentor provides answers to difficult situations. In reality, the true power and value of a mentor are not in the way they provide you with the answers, but in the way they understand your situation by asking questions that bring clarity to your own thought process. This is the classic Socratic Method of inquiry.

The other advantage of this approach to the mentoring process is that since you have to respond to the mentor’s questions, you own the answers and move ahead with confidence. The implication of this model is that anyone who provides you with ready answers to any situation that you face is not a long-term candidate for being your mentor. Getting answers on how to deal with your ongoing challenges makes you dependent on that person; this is not a good way to develop your own abilities and a richer perspective. (In the remainder of this article mentor is used both as a singular and plural noun.)

So, what is the prescription for your getting a mentor and deriving full benefit to develop yourself personally and professionally? The list below may provide some guidance:

1. First evaluate why having a mentor will benefit your career and personal



The true power and value of a mentor are not in the way they provide you with the answers, but in the way they understand your situation by asking questions that bring clarity to your own thought process.



growth. Identify and divulge your core incompetence to your mentor and then reconcile to the idea that to overcome this lacuna you must constantly learn by facing situations that expose you to the right challenges.

2. Mentoring is hard work on each side. Don’t jump in thinking that this is a free ride, with your being on the receiving end of the equation.
3. Develop relationships with those who could be your mentors. When you have developed enough trust, ask each person with whom you want this deep relationship if they would take you as their mentee. This understanding is a critical step in the ongoing relationship. Even if you work with a professional who gets paid for their time, this is a key step in the process. When a mentor is a paid professional, the give-and-take process is more structured. In this case your mentor is also your coach.
4. Be clear on how you are going to work with the mentor and how you would manage that relationship. Set your interactions and respect their parameters around these boundaries.
5. If the relationship is not fee-based (in such a relationship you are engaging a coach), make sure that you give something in return to the process so that the mentor feels rewarded. A mentor does not engage in a relationship with their mentee for material benefit; their benefit comes from having helped someone they care

about. Regardless of that need, you, as the mentee, have an obligation to make sure that the relationship is mutually sustainable.

6. Consider cross-industry mentors to enrich your learning and perspective. Some may wonder about divulging trade and industry secrets with the “outsiders.” This should not be a concern if you know how to “sanitize” your particular situation and seek advice that does not require having to compromise sensitive information. Besides, in a mentoring relationship you are not seeking so much technical advice as you are seeking insights on career advice. Such a relationship can also help you cross industries during your career.
7. Consider having a good gender balance among your “board” of mentors. Men need to work harder at embracing the concept of having mentors of opposite gender to enrich their perspectives.
8. In today’s global environment having awareness of different cultures is an edge that is worth having. Find someone who brings a rich cultural diversity to the process to enrich your perspective.
9. Do not hesitate in having someone much younger than you are as a member of your “board.” With rapid changes, young professionals can be invaluable in keeping you up-to-date with changes. What you want to learn from them is their different thinking perspective.
10. Before you present your ongoing challenge to your mentor, make sure that you have fully analyzed the situation, have your own perspective on it, and need some insights to take you to the next level of thinking. That is what mentors do. Merely taking a problem without specific and insightful questions diminishes the value of the relationship. Frequent abuse in this vein invariably results in losing the mentor’s interest in you. Use a mentor only when the situation requires it.

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Noteworthy

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performing well and to reassign people who are in the wrong role.

- Be prepared for inevitable surprises.

That means taking stock of when something beyond your control is major and enduring, which should force you to revisit your early leadership strategy. Or understanding that

the change is just a temporary obstacle, which may call for you to revisit the tactical approach to executing a new strategy.

In the end, Bradt suggests, successful executive on-boarding is about asking for feedback from all sides to help you gauge the early impressions you've made on a new employer organization, and chart

some course corrections in your behavior if required to buy you more time to succeed. The book includes downloadable forms to make on-boarding effective and instructive for leaders at every level.

And remember, better to ask for feedback and support than to push ahead without a full view (including the views of others) and risk a messy and perhaps involuntary transition. ■

Learnings from Landings

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one or two things really well in this process, what would that be?

A. Know thyself and be enthusiastic about the opportunity. Stay focused and don't let hurdles or bumps in the process deter you from selling your capa-

bilities. I honestly think that you could use job hunting as a behavioral strength in handling adversity or complex situations!

Q. Did you use the Internet as a tool?

A. Yes, for e-mail and researching the prospective company once that was made known. Using ExecuNet as a

resource for tips on interviewing and presenting yourself was very helpful.

Of all the websites dealing with job search and techniques, I feel ExecuNet is one of the best. Even though my new job did not come as result of job listings on ExecuNet, you were useful in providing information and a resource for coach and consul. Keep doing what you do. ■

Your Career Advisor

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11. During long periods of "quiescence" continue keeping in touch with your mentor. Your mentor may alert you to a lurking danger.
12. Make a point of calling your mentor and thanking them with specifics every now and then and for no other reason. Do not sandwich your thank yous between seeking their advice during the same session. Sending a thank you note (not just e-mail) works even better. Even if your mentor is a paid professional, such a gesture can only increase their commitment to you.
13. Be a mentor yourself to someone who can benefit from your perspective. By

Dilip G. Saraf is an executive, career and life coach at Career Transitions Unlimited. He has authored five books on career transition, career management, and succeeding in the corporate world. Dilip has changed careers four times, starting as an engineer, and has helped more than 2,500 clients reinvent themselves since the 2001 job meltdown. He frequently appears on CNN Headline News/Comcast Local Edition and other media. Dilip practices in the Silicon Valley and works with clients globally. Visit www.7keys.org

being a mentor to someone and by your being someone else's mentee, simultaneously doubles your ability to learn. It also makes you better understand the dynamic in a balanced way.

14. Do not seek anyone who works closely with you (your boss, colleague or customer) as your mentor. They lack the proper clinical distance to

provide you objective advice in the matters of your career and professional life. This can also undermine your working relationships with them.

Being a successful executive requires strong leadership skills. What better way to learn them than to find yourself a group of dynamic individuals who can shape your leadership? ■

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