



Cathy Alfandre's E-Letter

Create greater joy and fulfillment in your working life.

March 2007

Greetings!

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others."

--African proverb

Asking for Help

On a handful of personal and professional matters, I've recently received some invaluable support from friends, family members, and colleagues. I'm immensely grateful for all of the wisdom, guidance, ideas, support, and kindness. But I have to admit: Asking for their help wasn't easy for me. Sharing my disorganized thoughts, fears, concerns, and confusion is not something I do easily. Now the irony here is that I often encourage my clients to ask for support as they prepare for and go through career transitions.... And some of them struggle with it too. So I thought it might be helpful (both for myself and for you) to highlight some of the lessons I've learned, as well as some specific tips for getting more support.

Some Lessons Learned

- You can probably figure it out yourself, but the process will take longer and be more painful.
- If you're looking for creative ideas, you need outside perspectives. A confused mind isn't an especially creative place!
- Sometimes the thing you need most is to verbalize the thoughts swimming around in your head.
- It helps to get a reminder that other people have gone through (or are currently going through) the same period of uncertainty that you are.
- Chances are, those in your support system will be grateful that you asked them to help and will feel good that they were able to offer their perspective and advice.

Some Tips for Getting More Support

- **Identify your circle of support.** In her book, [Take Yourself to the Top](#), Laura Berman Fortgang calls this group your "inside ten." Whatever the number of people, the idea is that we all have a small circle around us of people who know, love, and believe in us, and really want us to succeed. Call on these people when you need a boost of energy, insight, and ideas.
- **Create an exchange.** Identify one or more people (perhaps from the circle above) with whom you can set up a mutual support system. I currently have an arrangement like this with two people in my life--one professional and one personal (though the domains sometimes overlap). We schedule phone calls with each other and usually spend part of each call focusing on one person's needs, then the other

person's.

- **Look into local job networking groups.** Here in CT, there are about a half dozen groups that meet to provide job leads, interview practice, and support for those in career transition. These kinds of groups exist everywhere.
- **Join or form a "Mastermind" group.** This is a structured group of people--often in different roles and from different walks of life--who come together regularly to provide ideas and support to each other. You can find groups like this through professional associations, local Chambers of Commerce, and other networking organizations.

My deepest thanks to those of you who have offered me support, especially recently.

All the best,
Cathy

Online Directory of Recruiting Firms

If you're in the midst of (or contemplating) a job search, you may want to consider partnering with one or more recruiting firms that specialize in your industry and area of expertise and are willing to represent you to potential employers. But how do you find these firms? Happily, there is an online resource for identifying and contacting recruiting firms across the nation. It is an easy-to-use and comprehensive website. Check out the Riley Guide at: www.rileyguide.com.

Upcoming dates for "Acing the Interview"

A reminder for those of you who may be interested in brushing up on your interviewing skills: This one-night course covers specific techniques you can use before, during, and after the interview to boost your confidence and your results. It includes time for participants to practice what they learn.

Fairfield, CT: **Thursday, April 5**, 7:00-9:00 pm (next week!)

Trumbull, CT: **Thursday, May 17**, 7:00-9:00 pm

Please visit www.cathyalfandre.com/current_happenings.php for more details and information. And please feel free to tell your friends!

This bi-monthly e-letter is intended to offer ideas, tips, resources, and questions to ponder on careers, fulfilling work, and career-life decisions. I welcome your reactions and your suggestions for future topics.

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