



Cathy Alfandre's E-Letter

Create greater joy and fulfillment in your working life.

May 2008

Greetings!

"The lobster [teaches] us that the only way to endure the passage of time and the limits of our mortality is to know that we are growing and changing, that we are becoming more than we have been with each year of our lives."

-- Eda LeShan

Time To Shed?

Perhaps it's the time of year. Perhaps it's coincidence. Perhaps it's the kind of language that I'm attuned to. Whatever the reason, it seems like folks I know have been expressing the need to shed a layer, to leave behind some part of their "old" selves and grow into something new.

One friend told me, somewhat unexpectedly, that she feels like "molting." Another literally lopped off about 1.5 *feet* of hair. A client told me that he now knows it's time to shed a business he started. Another told me she's feeling stuck and bored and wants to move into something new.

This recurring theme got me thinking: In the natural world, so many creatures--birds, snakes, dogs, insects--transform themselves through molting or shedding. It's a regular part of their process of life. As some of you know from a seminar I lead, lobsters must actually shed their shells at regular intervals in order to grow.

And yet, shedding is so difficult for many of us humans. We cling to our shells, our feathers, our current identities, sometimes long after they have outlived their usefulness. For some, it takes momentous events to shake us out of our comfortable skin (or at least skin we're accustomed to even if it isn't comfortable).

What if we viewed the shedding process as a natural, expected part of our lives? What if we viewed it not as something to be feared, but something to be welcomed like the really warm weather in springtime? What if we regularly sought to learn and grow in new ways?

Is there anything, small or large, that you are ready to shed?

Are there any new aspects of yourself, subtle or bold, you are ready to grow into and show the world?

Happy springtime to you, and all my best,

Cathy

Distinguishing Yourself...

... is the topic of an interactive tele-forum I'll be leading this coming **Monday, June 2, from 1:00-2:00 (EST)**. Over the last few years of career coaching, I've seen that one of the most important, yet most difficult, things to do during a job search is to distinguish yourself from the crowd. In this conference call, you'll get thought-provoking questions and guidelines to help you start distilling the key points that define your "personal brand": *what makes you special and what value you bring to your next (or current) employer*. You'll also learn the practical aspects of how to distinguish yourself throughout the job search process: when you are networking, when you are writing your resume and cover letters, and during the interview.

The call is being organized by the Women@Work Network. The fee for the call is \$25, unless you're a Women@Work member (members get to participate in 2 free calls per year). Visit www.womenatworknetwork.com to learn more about the network, and click on "Events" to register for the forum. You'll be given a phone number to call with a participation code. I hope you'll join the discussion!

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.

To my new subscribers: Welcome! If you would like to see copies of my previous e-letters, please go to my website where they are posted in the "Contact" section.

To all readers: Please feel free to share this e-letter with anyone you think may find it helpful! (Rest assured, though, that I will not share YOUR email address with anyone!)

[Read on...](#)

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