



The NRWA Connection

Linking Our Members ... Keeping Them Current

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Executive Greeting

Hello ,

When I started my writing business in 1980, the only people who worked from home sold Avon, Tupperware, Amway, and similar products. There was one book at my local store that talked about starting a secretarial service but nothing for résumé writers. And, there was no supporting organization like The NRWA. How I would have loved to have had a tool like The NRWA's e-list to ask questions of experienced entrepreneurs!



Nowadays, you can find a bazillion books on the subject of starting and running a business. One of those is *Go It Alone* by Bruce Judson. He shares six basic commands for operating a business on your own that I have tweaked for our industry.

1. ACT! "Always have a bias toward action," Judson says. If you spend too long in the planning stages, you will never know if your business idea will actually fly. It's scary to give up a steady job (and paycheck) to start your own business, but the reality is you can easily make \$150,000 a year if you write just two résumés a day, five days a week, 50 weeks a year (you need a two-week vacation), at \$300 each. That is assuming you are good at what you do.

2. CREATE THE WORK. Get off your duff! The work won't just land on your desk--you have to go out and find it! Pick up the phone, write an article, give a presentation, join some networking or business associations in your community, advertise in the Yellow Pages, optimize your website for search engines, and get active on social media sites.

3. FORGET PERFECT. Sometimes "good enough" is really all you need. We writers are a picky bunch. If we let something we wrote sit overnight, we will always make changes the next day even if what we wrote originally was just fine. Good enough doesn't mean with typos, though.

4. REFLECT. At the end of the day, ask yourself, "What did I accomplish?" If you spent too much of your time on menial tasks, then it is time to find a virtual assistant. This will allow you to focus on tasks that make money. I used to try to do all of my own bookkeeping until I met a woman who reminded me that she charged \$20 an hour for bookkeeping, which freed me to make \$96 an hour. Do the math!

5. ADAPT. Make your business as flexible as possible. Find out what the market really needs and add new skills and services. Stay current with trends in our industry by attending The NRWA annual conference (<http://bit.ly/Ndv1LW>) in September, participating in teleseminars/webinars, and reading.

6. SELL. I know. We all hate the idea of selling, but in one way or another, we are all sales people. We succeed by articulating an idea and convincing others to adopt it. When you are passionate about what you do, it's not hard to share that passion with potential customers, which is the most successful way to sell.

Warm regards,
[Pat Criscito](#),
Treasurer of The NRWA

Know Your Lines



By [Laura Labovich](#)

It is fairly common to hear a client say that she feels like she is already "onstage" performing the part of an accountant, a high school math teacher, or the marketing manager she is hopeful she will ultimately be. However, it is not easy for clients to articulate this during an interview, and here is precisely where you come in! Working with your clients to help them fine-tune their "lines" will help the interviewer envision them in the roles they seek.

No doubt, that articulate, poised, and persuasive communication is essential to a candidate's success in an interview, but, for the vast majority, these communication skills do not materialize overnight. Because the inability to express oneself in the interview is often worse than lacking experience for the job, having lines--and practicing them--is essential to landing a dream job.

Help your client develop her lines for the upcoming "show," and reassure her that it's acceptable to bring them into the interview. Encourage her to write down the highlights on a 3x5 card. This card will help her direct the conversation, should it go astray, and will remind her of the key points to call up when meaty answers are expected.

So, what goes on this card? It should include a summary of the sales materials you produce on her behalf, including the following:

1. The main reason the employer would want to hire his/her unique selling proposition.
2. Two key accomplishment stories that support her in this position.

3. An answer to a question that may surface as an employer objection.
4. Statement of why she wishes to work for the company.

Remind your client to review the card before she goes into the interview. It will help narrow the focus and goals for the interview and, ultimately, relieve some of her pre-interview jitters!

Laura M. Labovich, MLRHR, Job Search Makeover Coach, and Founder of Aspire! Empower! Career Strategy Group. Co-author, 100 Conversations for Career Success: Learn to Tweet, Cold-Call and Network Your Way to a Dream Job (published by LearningExpress, LLC - Fall, 2012) www.aspire-empower.com • email: lauramichelle@gmail.com.



Positioning Yourself for Successful Subcontracting



By [Kara Varner](#), A Platinum Résumé, MAOM, CPRW

After 20+ years of writing résumés, informally, I decided to hang out my own shingle and get at least one certification as soon as possible! I had no idea about the vast, diverse, and exciting world of professional résumé writing.

With a full-time job and a full-time family, I began slowly, but steadily, and grew quickly through referrals and basic website traffic. Business was seasonally up and down. After reviewing a request from another The NRWA member asking for a subcontractor, I decided to give it a try. Why not? Through that working relationship, I was able to continue to hone my craft while saving valuable marketing dollars and gaining knowledge from a more experienced and seasoned professional--and I made money! *Win-win.*

In order to enjoy subcontracting and become successful at it, it is important to focus on learning and vital to view it as an opportunity. Besides being the new kid on the block, what are some other reasons you may consider pursuing subcontracting?

- Because you enjoy the crafting part of résumé writing but not the necessary marketing aspects.
- To learn from those who have been there and done that, which often prompts conversations that relay first-hand pitfalls and success strategies.
- To supplement your income during dry periods, family priorities, or illness.
- To generate full-time income without any overhead.

Some things you'll want to consider having when setting yourself up for successful subcontracting:

- A contract that spells out the expectations of each party and is signed by both parties.
- Agreed upon payment percentage for each project, as stipulated in the contract or in writing, and takes into consideration the contractor's regular fees.
- Ability of the subcontractor to conduct business as a subcontractor and not as a representative of the business.
- Ability to redirect clients back to the contractor when additional products/services are asked for.
- Ability to accept critique/suggestions from the contractor, even if it is not the way you would do things.

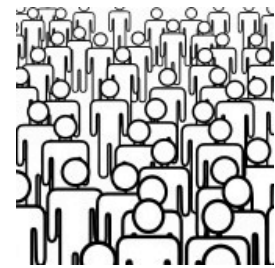
Why do so many writers shy away from this type of "employment?" Like many résumé writers, I plan to "think and grow rich," and one day would like to be a larger company considering employing subcontractors, as needed. With that in mind, being a subcontractor is the BEST on-the-job training for being a professional résumé writer who employs subcontractors. Success!

Kara Varner is President and CEO of A Platinum Résumé and a Certified Professional Résumé Writer, PARWCC, with a Master of Arts degree in Organizational Management and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration/Psychology. She currently works as an Employee Assistance Program Coordinator for the Department of Defense in Virginia. She is also a military spouse and has two energetic and joyful daughters who keep her on her toes. Website: aplatinumresume.com Email: aplatinumresume@yahoo.com Phone: 719-339-2659

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Why Military Struggle to Have a Successful Transition

[Troy Johnson](#), CPCC, CPRW, CEIP, CFJST, CEMC, TAP
Part 2 of 3

In part one of this article, I provided an overview of the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to help everyone understand the four components of TAP. Here, in part two, I will list top reasons why veterans struggle.



Your ex-military client would not go into war without a plan of attack. Yet, most fail to implement a Plan of Action in their job search campaign. Encourage your client to take an assessment, gather intelligence, and develop a plan/strategy with specific goals.

Individual responsibility plays a role. No one is going to hand your client a job after the military. The ex-military client must take action, because finding a job--is a job--and requires 20 to 40 hours per week of dedication.

Here are four reasons why your ex-military client may be struggling to find employment:

1. Started the transition process too late:

If the military member starts his/her transition process in the appropriate amount of time, he or she will allow enough time to implement and execute a successful, targeted job search plan and receive the DD214 (official military record of service).

However, starting the transition process early is not the norm. Around 30 to 40 percent of those separating or retiring start the process too late, thus, not giving themselves the adequate time to prepare or execute their transition plans. If a service member waits until the 90-day mark, this is already too late. If you add in terminal leave of 30 days or more, that will give the member around 45 days to transition out of the military, which is not enough time.

Retired service members tend to do a much better job at transitioning on time than those who are separating. This is most likely because a retiring service member can start the transition process two years out--a separating service member can only do so one year out!

There are a number of reasons why a member may start the transition late.

He/she might have been deployed, and upon his/her return, learned he/she had less than 90 days until separation. Other reasons service members may have a late start on their transitions could be neglected administrative actions, medical or legal issues, change of career, or Reduction in Force (RIF). Or they simply just don't know enough about the TAP.

Whatever the reason, transitioning on time is vital to a successful migration into the civilian world.

2. Failure to determine a primary or a secondary career path:

Some of those who are separating or retiring can successfully use their military occupational experience and move right into a quality civilian career. Others desire a total change in career or wish to go back to school for additional training. Then there are those who have no idea what their career path could be.

It is important that you help your military client determine a career path and then help him/her translate military experience into civilian language so employers visualize them in this new setting.

3. They have no job search strategy:

Most of those individuals getting out of the military simply write a résumé based on military experiences and start posting it on to online job boards with no success.

They skip the first phases of job searching, which, in my opinion, are the most important. They skip...

Conducting a personal appraisal of their skills, qualifications, talents, and accomplishments to match them up with a targeted industry or occupation.

Exploring career options. They fail to analyze the national and local labor markets to determine how they fit in, and they fail to identify barriers to employment. For example, some occupations require related certifications and degrees, and they don't have them. No matter how much related experience a service member has, if he/she doesn't have required certifications, it will be difficult to earn an interview.

Attaining an annual credit report. Another possible barrier to employment for the service members is their credit reports. I can almost guarantee the employers will be looking at their credit reports.

Researching average salary. Then there are some who transition out of the military with the expectations of finding employment fairly easy and expecting to make around the same salary that they are currently making in the military. They establish a salary requirement that is unrealistic.

4. They don't network:

Most military transitioning do a poor job networking. They don't understand that this is the number-one technique in finding employment. It's not what you know but who you know. Networking is about building relationships that may lead to a referral. It's about sharing resources, information, and ideas. Veterans must build allies to assist them in their campaigns; not many campaigns are successful with only one member. This is also true with federal employment.

In part two, I discussed my top reasons why veterans struggle during their transition. In part three, I will provide information to assist these service members and how we, the career professionals, can help them.

Screen Sharing Software

Report by [Rosa E. Vargas](#), The NRWA Marketing Chair

One of our trending topics on the e-list was about screen-sharing software. We have compiled a list of the tools recommended by Camille Roberts, Bridget (Weide) Brooks, and Sally McIntosh. To read more about this or other trending topics, sign up for our e-list and filter through the archives at <http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/NRWA-List/>.



Using a screen-share tool with your clients can be very productive in addition to distinguishing your process and business practices. If you decide to implement screen-sharing reviews or meetings into your practice, be sure to market this on your website. Anything that is distinct about your business will help you make an impression on prospective clients.

Joinme.com

WebEx.com

Glance.com

Skype.com

TeamViewer.com

Mikogo.com

Freescreensharing.com

CrossLoop.com

Yugma.com

Adobec onnectnow.c om

What is Happening in Region 3



[Troy Johnson](#), CPCC, CPRW, CFJST

Region 3 includes the following: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, and the Virgin Islands.

Due to the current state of the military and the downsizing of all branches, we at MacDill AFB in Florida and the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) have now seen an increase in volume of those separating and retiring from the military. With this, the demand to attend the Department of Labor TAP workshop has significantly increased.

The DOL TAP workshop is a three-day monthly voluntary workshop that averages 90 participants each quarter. This workshop covers various topics, including identifying strengths, skills, and values, as well as career exploration, résumé writing, and

interviewing. As of this month, the workshop is completely full.

With the number of veterans transitioning out, there will be an opportunity to reach out and assist those who have protected us.

Now for the Region 3 report.

Mike Maetz of Maetz Résumé Consulting, Marietta, GA reports that he has expanded his business and now has a team of GREAT résumé writers. I think it's safe to assume that with this rapid growth, he is going to have to add more writers, which is a great problem to have! He LOVES the marketing piece of the business and said he can't wait to have the entire day free to focus mainly on marketing and client acquisition.

Christine Speno of Words Etc. Writing & Editing, Palm Coast, FL reports that as a newer member of The NRWA, she is still exploring all of the great resources available. She aspires to achieve her NCRW certification and would like to attend The NRWA's 2012 National Conference in Charleston. She will soon be launching a revamped website hosted by Squarespace and is very excited about this. She was able to secure this website rebuild by bartering public relations services with a local web designer who is sponsoring a free event to introduce the vegan lifestyle in her community. Christine finds our newsletter The NRWA Connection to be a great source of information. She hopes to get more involved in the organization in the coming months and take advantage of the expertise of other members of The NRWA.

Laurie J Smith, CPRW, JCTC of Creative Keystrokes, Gastonia, NC reports that in the last several months she has completed two components of the Certified Social Media Strategist certification program from Susan Whitcomb's The Academies. She completed the "Online Professional Networking Strategist - LinkedIn" and "Social Networking Strategist - Facebook" training classes. She will be attending the third and final six-week component (Twitter) in June.

Kathy Harber of Career Keys to Open Doors, Atlanta, GA has welcomed an "employee." Her retired husband is now her official driver, her IT person, and her bookkeeper. She has seen a significant uptick in interview coaching, and loves watching clients gain confidence. She is also interested in trying to put together an Atlanta area lunch, hopefully in July, which will also let her and others promote the September conference.

Marsha M. Leap, Ed.D., of Leap Ahead Professional Development, Lakeland, FL reports that she has put off earning the NCRW certification for way too long and has set a goal of this summer to fulfill the requirements to become certified. She had added the Leadership Challenge Workshop to her repertoire and enjoys taking client's career management to the next level. She is about to expand even further by partnering with other résumé writers to help meet the workload demand for quality résumés. She stated, "I appreciate the camaraderie of The NRWA members and their willingness to help and offer guidance. It's a wonderful organization of professionals."

Affiliate Spotlight

This week, we spotlight WinTheView.com



www.WinTheView.com is a powerful interview preparation and presentation tool that is designed to help job seekers determine the critical hiring requirements and formulate the key points they wish to articulate during the interview. This step-by-step process features several content libraries to help the candidate generate accomplishment stories, personal success factors, personal branding terms, a 30- to 60-day action plan, and a "Why hire me?" summary page. A PDF file may then either be emailed in advance or printed for distribution at the interview to impress the hiring team.

WTV enables the job seeker to prepare a private, online portfolio of interview presentations, follow-up letters, and accomplishment stories. This data is kept online and may be accessed at any time for future career opportunities. Career experts offering this innovative tool (at a very reasonable investment) are able to add value, increase revenue, and differentiate their client services. To learn more, please contact Ken Diamond at kjdiamond@wintheview.com or 215-948-3722.

To check out a complete listing of our Affiliate Partners or for more information on becoming an Affiliate, click [here](#).

Thanks for reading this issue of The NRWA Connection!

Sincerely,

The NRWA Board
