

## **Six Cs for Your Job Search**

The job and internship search can be divided into stages and each step on the path leads to the next step. The Career Management Center (CMC) has labeled the steps and identified 6 of them: **Contact, Connect, Communicate, Convince, Close and Celebrate**. There is a 7<sup>th</sup> C, which is **Confidence**, and it pervades the whole search process. Actually, the 7<sup>th</sup> C may be the one that is the most difficult for you. Having a sense of control over the 6 Cs is one sure way to reclaim the 7<sup>th</sup>, your Confidence.

### **1. CONTACT**

Most people in the US (75% according to research) find their next job through networking, which means using their personal and professional **CONTACTS**. Because you are on an MBA campus, this percentage may seem exaggerated, but year after year the research number comes out between 70% and 80%.

Think back! How did you find your previous jobs before Fuqua? Many of you used your Contacts. As you progress in organizations having more experience and seeking higher-level jobs, it really will be “who you know” as well as what you bring to the new organization. But first you have to get in the game; you must get your name into the company to even be considered. Once you are a candidate, then your background, expertise and communication skills will be key to getting the offer.

Using and maximizing your contacts is how the off campus job market really works. It is also how you will find most of the jobs you have for the rest of your career. So, how does it work?

#### **Primary Contacts**

These are the people who: 1. Know you, 2. Respect or like you, 3. Will return your call. These are not the people who will hire you, because they are not likely to have a job that will fit you at this moment. So, don't ask for a job! Ask for information, advice and their contacts. Their primary contacts lead you to your secondary contacts. Thank them; they are your “home team”.

#### **Secondary Contacts**

In the first sentence when you reach a secondary contact, use the person's name that suggested you make the contact. Now, you have their attention. Then ask them for information, advice, and their contacts. Do NOT ask for a job. If they have one, they will tell you, but if you ask and they don't have one, they will assume they can't help. When your secondary gives you their primary, you are now in the third level of a network. Thank them. Some of these contacts may become your own primaries.

### **Tertiary Contacts**

Now the opportunities begin to appear. Your secondaries would not have used their own network to help you if they did not think there was some type of opportunity. Again, ask for information, advice, and contacts. Do not ask for the job. When these contacts give you additional names, use them in the same manner as above. And yes, thank them.

### **Follow-on**

About 2 weeks after you make a contact with any level of your network, call them or email them again. They have now had time to consider your request and may have additional suggestions.

**Keep good records of all your contacts!** This is a critical part of career management; you will now have your own database, usable for the next 30 years. You may be surprised how often the same people cross your path in the future, sometimes at professional conferences, sometimes on vacation, sometimes on the golf course, sometimes in the new company where you were just recruited. In order to keep good records, some of you will use a spreadsheet, some a 3 ring binder; the method does not matter. What does matter is not to lose contact with the people who assist you now. This is a barter exchange; this year they help you and in the future, you help them.

## **2. TURNING CONTACTS INTO CONNECTIONS**

It's all about them, not you. You are continually building relationships. Contacts become Connections when you focus on them, their company, their career, what they do in their current position, and what is important to them. Remember, this is a barter exchange, and they will be using you in the future to assist them in a project or in their own career. So get to know them.

When you have accepted a new position, you must go back to each of your contacts and thank them for their help. They also need to know how to reach you—remember they may soon need you for their own contact network!

As a student, you have more time and resources to keep current on the latest articles and business trends than does the typical executive. Sending an article or hyperlink to a Contact may do a lot to turn him/her into a Connection.

### **3. COMMUNICATION**

Companies that recruit on campus expect to see resumes in the format the CMC has provided for you to use in the Resume Book. Most companies off campus will be looking for a different format; one resume format does not fit all situations. You will first develop the Resume Book format, and later in the year write a second one that may be used for off campus searches now or in your future.

#### **Resume Questions to consider:**

- How much of your resume page is given to your degrees and how much to business experience? Both are very important, so don't shortchange describing the business expertise you had prior to your MBA.
- For your off-campus search, do you need an introductory line or two at the top of the resume as a "Professional Summary" or "Profile"? The company recruiter (or your network contact) will then quickly know which job you are targeting and might fit. Examples:
  1. MBA with marketing and project management experience.
  2. Finance professional with MBA and international experience.Many other examples may be found in books in The Fuqua Ford Library. CMC counselors are also glad to assist you.
- Have you highlighted too many club affiliations? If you are a leader in a club, that is very important. Also if you are a career changer and are active in a club that reflects your new career focus, that would be key to being viewed in a different way from your previous jobs. However, if you joined several clubs, but they do not reflect leadership or focus, they may just make you look busy or even unfocused. They may also appear to have interfered with class work, rather than supplement it.

### **THE COVER LETTER**

The purpose of a cover letter is to uncover the resume. Research shows that most resumes are read in only 22 seconds! You don't want to give away much of this time to the cover letter. Once you get the reader's attention, he/she will consider giving more time to read your credentials and experience. Other research says that only 50% of cover letters are read, but you still need to have one that is specific to the opportunity you are contacting. The best cover letters are customized for the company and the opportunity.

### **Cover Letter Questions to consider:**

- Have you used the same words in your cover letter that were used in the company job description? Both for electronic and for human scanning, the company expects you to use the same words they have used in describing the job opportunity.
- Have you ONLY repeated in the cover letter the same info that is in your resume? That is not the purpose of a cover letter. Give them a “hook” as to why you are an exceptional fit for that company and that position,
- Do you have more than 3 paragraphs? The more they have to read in the cover letter, the less time they will take on the resume. Sell them that you have researched their particular needs and you can be the answer they are looking for.
- Are you sending the same cover letter to every company? One size does NOT fit all. Research, network and customize.

### **4. CONVINC**

So, you have done your contacting, connecting and communicating. You are now on the phone or in the room with “the Decision Maker.” How do you convince the person that you are the best candidate for the job?

- What value do you bring? Every organization, including not-for-profit and the government, is about adding value to someone. Who would your customer be and how would that organization be different if you were working there?
- Know thyself! What are your strengths, dreams, goals, track record, weakness, hopes and potential? The better you know yourself and what motivates you, the better you can customize your convincing sales pitch on why they should hire you.

- Know thy Listener! Do your research on the industry, company (and its competitors) and position. Then do research on the people you will meet. Were they recently promoted or published? Did they speak at a conference this year? Are they in the same industry they were in five years ago? Did they come from your native state? Did they change careers? Where did they get their MBA? What do you have in common? Get to know them better than they know you.
- Modify your communication style to the communication style of the decision maker! If they like “big picture”, communicate big picture. If they like detail, give them details. If they like to brainstorm, think outside any box or silo and show creativity. They will not accommodate your communication style, but you certainly must accommodate theirs!
- While adapting to an interviewer’s communication style is important, it is critical you do not try to change yourself, the core of who you really are. Trying to be a different person for each interview will not help.
- Be true to yourself! If you cannot convince a company that you are a great fit, maybe it just is not the right company for you.

## **5. CLOSE**

If this is an opportunity you want, ask for it. **Recruiters** give feedback that Fuqua students do not sell themselves and that they do not ask for the job. Suggestions follow.

- At the close of the interview (whether by phone or in person) summarize the skills and strengths that make you a good fit for the job.
- I am really interested in your company and in this particular position, how might I strengthen my candidacy?
- Is this the beginning of the hiring process for this position or close to decision time?
- When can I expect to hear from you?
- How do you see that I might fit into your organization?

- Restate in your thank you note that this is the job you want and why. Reiterate how you are a good fit, based on your expertise and experience. Give examples.
- In your follow-on phone or email, again state your interest and the value you would add.
- A good time to position your interest is just prior to the questions you ask about the company at the end of your interview.
- Do not say, “You are my number one company” without being able to back it up. Be more specific about why you want to work in their company, as well as that division or department. Mention the research you have done.

## **6. CELEBRATE!** (There is more to it than the party.)

- Thank each person who has helped you along the journey. Remember the primary contacts, your references, professors, family contacts, friends, and anyone who assisted. Business etiquette and common courtesy are critical. These are the people who will help you for the next few decades in your career management; you will also be helping many of them.
- Let each of your contacts know where you will be working and how to reach you. Remember this is a “barter relationship” and you will now be able to return the favor of networking.
- Accept the offer in writing and include any special items you have negotiated, especially those that are different from your offer letter. (Sign-on bonus, additional vacation, a later employment start time, etc.)
- Follow up with any key decision makers (inside or outside of your new company) who helped you connect with the right people.
- Communicate with any other employers still in the process of evaluating your candidacy. Tell them you're off the market for now but would like to keep in touch.
- Now, **PARTY!**