

Creating a good plan is a first step

Written by Julie Desmond

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Big news! Minnesota's unemployment rate has finally dipped back to where it was before the bottom fell out of our collective economy. However, the jobs that have been created during the recovery are different from the jobs that were lost.

That means, even as hiring activity picks up, you might still be looking for work. Updating your skills through training programs will help you find new work faster. Having a game plan will help, too. My friend, Jonathan, shared his game plan with me recently, and he says it's been a good tool for him.

Jonathan's game plan has three parts: beginning, middle, and end.

In the beginning, Jonathan describes where he's been and what his strengths are, in the form of a Profile Summary. This amounts to an elevator speech, a ten second a commercial, a sound byte... a brief explanation of who he is and what he does. Included in the Profile Summary is the title of the person he reported to, the number of people who reported to him and one or two key accomplishments that illustrate how fabulous he is at his chosen profession.

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In the middle, we get Jonathan's Target Roles and Target Market. This includes titles of jobs he will accept, and the market he is exploring, including geographic area, industries, and size of organization he hopes to work for.

Finally, we get to a list of companies, examples of the places where Jonathan hopes to work.

This write-up is not a resume, not a CV and not a job application. Jonathan might never share this document with anyone but me. But if Jonathan posts this document over his computer, on his refrigerator and alongside the bathroom mirror, he will be able to keep a clear line of sight on his goals. When someone says, I work at ABC company, Jonathan quickly responds, "I've been looking for a position there. How long have you been there? It looks like a good company. Do you know anyone in the QRS department?"

Whether you're looking for your first job, changing careers or urgently need a new position, creating a good plan will help; knowing where you want to go is the first step to getting there.

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