



Lamp Lighter

Volume I Issue 2

APRIL 2009

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Mission Statement

The ETP Monthly Newsletter, Lamp Lighter, is written by ETP member volunteers who are sharing their unique experiences and timely topics with the ETP membership.

Contact Information

Contact us with your comments and suggestions at lamplighter@etpnetwork.com

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Feel free to volunteer and be part of our team just drop us an email at lamplighter@etpnetwork.com

Send your comments, ideas and questions to: lamplighter@etpnetwork.com
Feel free to volunteer - join the staff - send us your contact information at lamplighter@etpnetwork.com



## Welcome

Welcome to our April/May 2009 issue of the ETP network Lamplighter newsletter. Special thanks to Scott Chase, Eric Nilsson and the newsletter team for their contributions.

As you travel in the ship called "Your Career", the turbulent sea of "uncertain economic times" tosses you around. The ride is rough and the sky very dark. At times it's hard to see any ray of hope 2 feet in front of you. After days or months of being tossed about, you rub your eyes of self doubt and try to refocus.

Just when you thought you would not find a safe landing, out of no where, in the far distance, the lighthouse beacon of Empowering Today's Professionals (ETP) Network appears. During this entire time you have been sending out S.O.S signals to associates. Someone from your network provides you with coordinates to enter into the Internet GPS system. This steers you to register for the free weekly conference call.

You now establish communication with the lighthouse keeper, Rod Colon. Through his warm trusted network, he rallies the town lamplighters called ETP Network Leaders. Rod lines up the lamplighters across the beach. They raise their torches of sharing time and knowledge to help you safely guide your ship. You stay the course, steadily taking a little action everyday to "own your career".

Finally, you land safely. You contact your associates to thank them and share your experience with ETP Network. Now it's your turn to grab a torch to help the lamplighter team bring in the next ship safely.

Stay the course every week on the conference call.

Carl E. Reid, CSI  
Chief Operations Officer  
Empowering Today's Professionals (ETP) Network  
"Own Your Career"  
[www.etpnetwork.com](http://www.etpnetwork.com)



**Calendar  
April & May 2009**

Group Leaders feel free to contact us with your group's schedule at [lamplighter@etpnetwork.com](mailto:lamplighter@etpnetwork.com)  
See ETP Network event web page for more information

APRIL 7th. [COMBINED DINNER MTG: John Hadley on "How to Turn Interviews In to Offers"](#)

APRIL 16TH [CEO of ME, Inc. Networking and Training Workshop - Advance Registration Required - Platinum Member \\$10 - Associates & Guests \\$20](#)

APRIL 19th [Walk with the Mitzvah Squad and ETP Network Members for Multiple Sclerosis Fund Raiser](#)

APRIL 30th [Jersey Shore Networking Group - Free](#)

May 14th [Manhattan Networking Group](#)

May 28th [Jersey Shore Networking Group, Manalapan Library 6:30P.M.](#)



### Public Service Announcements

1. **Walk with the Mitzvah Squad and ETP Network Members at the Multiple Sclerosis Fund Raiser** on April 19, 2009 beginning at 8:00 AM at Nomahegan Park, Cranford, NJ. Contact Rod Colon at [rod@etpnetwork.com](mailto:rod@etpnetwork.com) for additional information.
2. **NJ FAMILY CARE Medical and Dental insurance for you and your dependants.** Check out <http://www.njfamilycare.org/> for more information.



## ARTICLES OF INTEREST

### THE BLACK HOLE

BY SCOTT CHASE

[scott@scott-chase.com](mailto:scott@scott-chase.com)

Well you must be wondering, especially if you are new to the job search, what is the “Black Hole”? Quite simply, it is the database, desk, or other repository that your resume goes into when you submit it through any on-line site. That being said, why would anyone want to do this? I don’t think anyone knows better, heck, I did not know better until I was introduced to the ETP Network. I sent hundreds of resumes into the black hole with only limited success. I now know better, here is my experience on how things have changed for me.

I will start out with an actual experience. I applied for the particular job; it was a good match for my skills, through the company’s website. I included a targeted resume and a cover letter. Weeks went by, and nothing, no phone call, no contact whatsoever from the company, so, I moved on. The posting disappeared from my searches, so I thought it was filled.

Then, another couple of weeks after I last saw the posting, it reappeared again. Same posting, just with a new posting date. At this point, I now know the ETP 7 step job search system (see my article in the Feb. issue of the Lamp Lighter for more information). Instead of submitting it to the black hole, I went to work using the system. I still had my targeted resume, so I moved on to finding an advocate within the company. The search on LinkedIn was disappointing. I did not have any contacts in HR or in the department where the position resides. What to do? I went to the website of the company, and started poking around there website. After spending some time looking around, I was able to not only find HR recruiter names and contact information, but, I also found names and contact information for the people in the department I was trying to get into. I then started to call and e-mail the HR people and some of the people in the department I wanted to work in. The next day, I received an e-mail from the hiring manager for the position. He stated that I could send him my resume for his review. At the same time, the recruiter for the position also sent me a note that they have my resume on file and will contact me if I am a match for the position. (I now know they got my original resume and this proves a point about the “Black Hole”)

I finally got my resume looked at by the hiring manager. I also got an interview and a second interview this past week. It goes to show you the power of NOT letting your resume go into the “Black Hole”. I will find out about this position next week, maybe this will lead to my next article, “The Landing!!”

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## Wanting and Able But Are You Ready – Answering Tough Interview Questions

By James Yoakum



So you have reached that pivotal point of the job search process – the interview. Your prep work, your effort – a great resume, job boarding and virtual and face-to-face networking succeeded. It was a lot of work – but it paid off. You got the interview. Breathe a sigh of relief. But just a short sigh because now the work really begins. You want to make the most of the interview process. You know you are able to do the job, but you now must communicate that and sell you to the interviewer and your next position.

So are you ready? There's no worse feeling than when you're in an interview and the interviewer ask you a question to which you don't know the answer. The way to handle and avoid this is to go the interviewed prepared. All interview questions will seem difficult without readiness. Thorough preparation will make all questions, even the tough ones, surmountable and manageable. You want to eliminate the unknown. Familiarize yourself with a few difficult questions and prepare your answers before the interview. Not only is this the best way to reduce and avoid nervousness; it will place you in a position to do your best in the interview.

You don't want improper or ineffective answers to interview questions to become a deal killer. To strengthen the delivery of your answers, it is critical that you have honed interview and communication skills. Learn to speak clearly and effectively. Nonverbal communication is important too. You will want to have good body language. You also will want eye contact that shows confidence and says "hire me." Anything else sends you the message you aren't prepared and can't answer the tough questions.

So plan to be ready. Prepare, prepare, prepare. This is the key to a successful interview.

First some general tips to get you ready to handle the interview and the resulting questions.

- Know your audience: Research the company; know what they do and how the job you are interviewing fits with the company. If you know the name of the interviewer, Google them. With the availability of information today, made possible by the internet, there's no excuse for not going into an interview armed with lots of insider knowledge and intelligent questions.
- Put your materials together. Bring a copy of your cover letter, your resume, your LinkedIn profile, letters of recommendation, references, etc. Place them in organized fashion easily accessible to share and provide with the interviewer.
- Make a list of the key points about yourself including your strengths, any unique skills you have or exceptional accomplishments you have had. Include skills and successes that differentiate you from the competition.
- Prepare a list of questions: The interview should be give and take. It isn't an interrogation; it is an exchange of information. Prepare a list of questions that you want to ask about that you need to know to determine if the job is a good fit (e.g., job responsibilities, required skills, chain of command, etc.). Asking appropriate questions



shows you are interested in the job and the company. It gives the interviewer a chance to talk and creates an opportunity to connect.

- Prepare of list of question you might be asked. And prepare answers (though you have to be careful not to come across as too scripted). Be prepared to hone your interview skills by practicing. The old saying “Practice Makes Perfect” applies. Plan to conduct mock job interviews; perhaps videotape yourself. Take turns being the interviewee and the interviewer. Rehearse but don’t memorize answers.

The number of potential questions is infinite. You can search the web for the plenary of questions and the many opinions (sometimes different) on how to answer them. To get you started, here are my top ten difficult questions and suggestions on how to construct an answer.

### **1. Tell me about yourself.**

This is often the first question in an interview and provides you a chance to shine. It is an open ended question that many fail at by telling everything. The best answer is a two to three minute snapshot of who you are, what you have to offer and why you are the best person for the job. Talk about what you have done to prepare yourself to be the best and use examples to back it up.

### **2. What is your greatest weakness?**

This is the classic difficult question. Fielding the question well will demonstrate that you can take initiative and improve. To do so, do not follow the old generic approach selecting by a strength and presenting it as a weakness. Examples of these answers are “I have no weaknesses,” “I am workaholic,” and “I am a perfectionist.” Instead select a business weakness you have been working to overcome. Show you are taking the initiative and improving yourself. Don’t call it a weakness, but present it as a window of opportunity. For example, “I have had trouble with planning and prioritization in the past. However, I am taking steps to correct this. I just started using a planner.” Then show the planner and how you are using it.

### **3. Have you ever had a conflict with a boss? How was it resolved?**

No is not an acceptable answer and will only cause the interviewer to dig deeper. You want your answer to demonstrate how you behaviorally reacted to the conflict and what you did to resolve it. Try to show your familiarity with broad, effective conflict management practices. However, never talk badly about the boss or company in responding; a potential boss may anticipate you would talk that way about him in the future. Emphasis how much you have learned by the conflict.

### **4. Are you a team player?**



Yes is the correct answer. But you will need to provide behavioral examples. Emphasis teamwork and focus on openness to diversity of backgrounds. Talk about the strength of the team above the individual. This question is difficult since the interview is to sell “I”. In answering this question you must sell yourself and still show you are a team player.

**5. *If I were to ask former superiors to describe you, what would they say?***

This is the threat of a reference check question. Ask prior bosses in advance to know the answer. Give an answer that provides an example of how you work with the authority – supportive and responsible. Better yet come armed with letters of recommendation and show them to the interviewer. .

**6. *Why should I hire you or what can you offer me that another can can't?***

The right answer is that you are the best person for the job. Say so and back it up with what specifically differentiates you. Show passion in your examples. Talk about your record of getting things done; how you will be an asset.

**7. *Would you be willing to accept a salary cut?***

Salary is a difficult topic with today’s tough economy. How much a company can offer might be a deal breaker. If you have to, indicate what you are making or made in your last job. Try though to direct the conversation away from salary. Stress that you are more interested in the position and the job responsibilities.

**8. *Why do you want to change jobs or why did you leave your last job?***

Be brief, upbeat and to the point without hurting yourself. Focus of the things learned in your last job. Don’t make excuses; don’t bad mouth your former employer. You do not want to come across as whining. Answer honestly as possible; don’t fabricate a story. You want to come across as seeking a new job for positive reasons. Speak to the great opportunities this new job offers and how you will be able to leverage your existing skills and build new ones.

**9. *The “Why” question or the question about some fatal flaw on your resume.***

Hopefully you have none. Examples are: “Why didn’t you finish your degree?” “You have an accounting degree but not the CPA?” or “Why have you been in the job market for so long?” Be open and straightforward; don’t apologize and don’t try to explain it away. Acknowledge the issue and explain why it will not be an obstacle to your ability to performance exceptionally in this job. Try to indicate you have had to work harder to overcome and achieved better performance as a result.

**10. *What do you do best?***



This question demands you praise yourself, something a lot of people find difficult to do. Plan to answer by talking about your successes such as how you improved the business, generated new business or saved the company money. Discuss the strengths you have that go beyond meeting this job's qualifications. Indicate what you can offer that other candidates can not.

You want to walk into interview as a posed professional who is prepared, calm under pressure and ready to do the job. Preparation builds confidence and assurance that you know your stuff. So prepare extensively and sufficiently, so can you succeed and get that next job. Good luck!

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## Words and Grammar Count

By Eric Nilsson

**WAR IS PEACE  
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY  
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH**

Three simple Sentences. Nine common Words. Seven different Meanings.

This slogan from 1984's Ministry of Truth seems oxymoronic; yet the meanings of each sentence are made clear in the novel. For an explanation of these phrases and their use, read Emmanuel Goldstein's essay, The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism.

Of the nine words, the only constant is "is", a word meaning "equals". The words on the lines mean different things to different people, however. How can "War" equate with "Peace", or "Freedom" with "Slavery"; how are the ignorant strong? In addition, each of the terms is fraught with emotional responses – war is abhorred, while peace is sought; slavery is the antithesis of freedom; and how can the ignorant know strength?

The words on the lines mean different things to different people because the context of the words is understood by one group of people, but not the other. This is true in any form of communication, written, verbal, or physical. A writer sends an email that means one thing to him, but may have an entirely different meaning to the reader. A comedian's jokes fall flat because the audience hasn't experienced the context of the jokes. Someone throws up his hands in exasperation, while another assumes it is surrender.

People hear what they want to hear and read what they want to read. Some speakers or writers are well aware of this fact, generating speeches and authoring essays to capture those who are not aware. This is known as speaking to the listener or writing to the reader. The purpose of this is to have the listener or reader empathize with the speaker or writer. In so doing, the audience is basically agreeing with the speaker, the reader is basically agreeing with the writer, and both walk away fulfilled.



In Politics and the English Language, George Orwell (Eric Blair) decries the politicization of English. The old saying, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me” no longer is valid. Because vocabularies have shrunk, what could be meaningful words and phrases are now considered offensive. In attempting to reduce offense, sentences become ponderous, requiring alterations to grammar.

For example, the pronouns “he”, “she”, and “it” are singular and refer to, respectively, man, woman, and neuter genders. In today’s politicized world, mankind must be referred to as “humankind”. Where “he” had been used to refer to an ambiguous person, “he or she”, “he/she”, or “they” is used; of these, “he or she” is more correct. Why? Because the pronoun “they” is plural. This is true for objects (him, her, it, or them) and possessives (his, hers, its, theirs). This is but one example of politics overriding correct grammar.

Often, people use a noun to describe a third person of unknown gender. An example is: The policeman that stopped the car showed their badge. “Policeman” describes a person and should take the pronoun “who”. The singular “policeman” always uses the singular possessive, either “his”, “her”, or “his or her”. Instead of “their” for a singular non-specific pronoun, be consistent in the use of either “his” or “her”. An example is , “My manager would often tell her staff that she would authorize overtime for government projects.”

The correct use of grammar is not dead, however; it may be merely dormant, a Sleeping Beauty awaiting her Prince Charming. Grammar need not be glamorous, but it must be able to convey your intent. Simply knowing that a sentence must have a subject (stated or implied) and a verb is a start. There are enough free grammar web sites to help anyone who wishes to improve grammar and move past the subject-verb stage of making sentences.

The same is true with words. There are enough web sites to review words that are not familiar, either on-line dictionaries or thesauruses. Words gain value through the thesaurus; different words or phrases can be used to replace the original word. While this is advantageous, it has its own problems, namely that the replacement word may have a different meaning in the context in which it is used. Make sure you understand the words you are using and the context in which they are or will be used.

One final word of warning. Word processors are terrific tools, but they are basically fancy typing machines (the original “typewriter” described the job of someone who used a typing machine). Unfortunately, too many people today allow word processors to do their thinking and writing. The line “Freedom is Slavery” also means, “Slavery is Freedom”; but being a slave to correct grammar and word usage allows freedom, where the freedom to use a word processor often makes a slave of the free.



## Etiquette Counts For Success

By Adelaida A. Rodriguez, PMP

*“Whenever two people come together and their behavior affects one another, you have etiquette. Etiquette is not some rigid code of manners, it’s simply how persons’ lives touch one another.”*

**Emily Post**

Since business and office etiquette are essential for success in the business world, with the Emily Post Institute’s permission, I have gathered together some articles from the Emily Post Institute website that would aid us in our business relationships.

Please use this link to their site <http://www.emilypost.com/business/index.htm>. It takes users to the business section of their site, which is where they can find more information about business, office, and other facets of etiquette.

### ***Business ~ Workplace Etiquette***

#### ***Job Interview Tips 101***

Your resume is perfectly printed on high quality paper and you've practiced answering every offbeat interview question your roommate can pitch at you. Here are a few more tips to prepare you for the big event.

##### ***Scout it out***

- There are several reasons to pay a visit to a company before you have your interview.
- You will know how to get there and how long it takes.
- You will see how people in the office dress.
- You will meet the receptionist and learn his name. This is also a good person to ask about the company in general.
- You can pick up any literature on the company that may be provided in the reception area: annual report, sales brochures, newsletter.
- You can find out the name of the person who will interview you, if you haven't been told already.

##### ***Be on time***

There are no exceptions to this rule. If necessary, perform a trial run to see how long it takes to get to your destination. If an unforeseen emergency arises (the subway breaks down between stations), call as soon as possible: apologize, explain and offer to reschedule. Even that may not save the situation.

##### ***Dress appropriately***

In the old days, a coat and tie or suit would usually do the trick. Now, offices run the gamut from shorts and sandals to "office casual" to traditional suits. Do your homework. Either call or visit to find out what the office dress code is. A visit will let you see what your future colleagues wear to work. A good bet is to dress slightly more formally than the average. In other words, if most people wear slacks and a sport shirt, wear slacks with a



coat and tie. Everyone in coat and tie? Wear a suit. Everyone in a suit? Wear your Best Suit.

### ***Grooming***

Neatness is as important as wearing appropriate attire. Your shoes should be shined and your clothes should be pressed and spotless. No hanging threads, tears or missing buttons. Hair should be freshly combed and nails clean and trimmed. Women should keep make-up simple and hairstyle tidy. Use an extra swipe of antiperspirant, but lay off the cologne.

### ***The Name Game***

Nothing is more awkward than having people ask who you are! Introduce yourself to the receptionist and give your name! “Hi, my name is Mary Smith. I have a 10 o'clock interview with Jane Doe.” Make a note of the receptionist's name. Be sure to know the name of the person interviewing you. “How do you do, Ms. Doe, I am Mary Smith. Thank you for seeing me today.”

### ***Handshakes***

“Stand up straight, look 'em in the eye, say their name and give 'em a firm handshake,” was my Dad's recipe for making a good impression. If you are in doubt about this principle, practice with a friend. Have your friend look off in the distance and offer you a limp hand. Have your friend look at your feet and mumble something. Have your friend squeeze your hand and pump your arm enthusiastically. Now have your friend look you in the eye and give you a firm handshake. What do you think? Now, buy your friend a cup of coffee.

### ***Say thanks***

At the end of the interview, stand, thank the interviewer for her time, look her in the eye and shake her hand. A short note of thanks—nothing fawning—is also appropriate.

Adelaida A. Rodriguez, PMP  
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## **Volunteering: A Way to Add Core Skills**

By Joe Auerbach

Based on the overwhelmingly positive response to the articles in the Premiere (February) edition of Lamplighters, we've decided to further pursue one of the areas that was addressed, namely the idea of using transition time to be able to give back to the 'community', whether that's defined as local or otherwise, using skills that you had previously, or skills that you develop as part of the volunteering process. The New York Times recently described ([From Ranks of Jobless, a Flood of Volunteers](#)<sup>1</sup>) how a number of people found rewarding opportunities via [volunteernyc.org](http://volunteernyc.org)<sup>2</sup> and other leads. While it's usually easier to contribute something that you already have, it can be both refreshing and self-enhancing to add “another arrow in your quiver” of capabilities.

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Send your comments, ideas and questions to: [lamplighter@etpnetwork.com](mailto:lamplighter@etpnetwork.com)  
Feel free to volunteer - join the staff - send us your contact information at  
[lamplighter@etpnetwork.com](mailto:lamplighter@etpnetwork.com)



When people think of volunteering, there are usually a couple of groups that immediately come to mind, such as the [American Red Cross](#)<sup>3</sup>, or the [Boy Scouts](#)<sup>4</sup>/[Girl Scouts](#)<sup>5</sup>. For the sports minded, coaching local youth teams in one or more activities has been popular for many years. Not to denigrate or dissuade you from those 'standards', but have you considered helping out with some activity that may not be as widespread or well known? For instance, your local library will often be trying to make technical facilities available to those who may not have access to them for whatever reason, ranging from not being able to afford them to just not knowing what to get, especially for older folks who haven't had prior exposure to computers and don't know what to get. That's where you might be able to make a difference, by offering to lead sessions on computer basics, or specific applications such as word processing, desktop publishing or Internet access and searching. While the motivation might be to share your knowledge with others, you will also be having an opportunity to build your network of contacts to include those whom you otherwise might not have gotten to know. The site [VolunteerMatch](#)<sup>6</sup> has the ability to look for different types of activities in whatever geographical area you specify. For those who haven't yet overcome their fear or anxiety in public speaking, working one-one or in small groups in a 'friendly' environment is a way of doing so. Of course, once you're more comfortable in talking to others, your networking 'comfort level' is improved as well.

Similarly, there are often activities going on in communities large and small that may be 'under the radar' until something happens to give them more exposure. For instance, in just about every area, there is usually some sort of blood drive going on or being scheduled, as whole blood and blood products have a relatively short shelf life and are constantly needed. In contrast to some foreign countries, in the US whole blood donations cannot be accepted from paid donors (for certain blood products, donors can sometimes be paid, as described on the [American Cancer Society's](#)<sup>7</sup> site, which also contains information regarding the safety of the donation process and how the blood supply is kept safe). In addition, there are often specialized types of drives, such as bone marrow registrations or platelet collections. Please see [American Red Cross – Give Blood](#)<sup>8</sup> for further information and additional links.

One other area we'll touch on is the participation in volunteer efforts involving physical labor, such as home (re)building (a la 'Habitat for Humanity' and similar groups), or even less strenuous activities, such as joining in clearing a neighborhood area for a park or playground. In 'times gone by', communal house and barn 'raisings' were frequent occurrences (still practiced by the Amish) that gave the community a sense of camaraderie and belonging together. Besides the sense of accomplishment, this might also be an opportunity to brush up on, or learn, skills such as carpentry, woodwork and other household-related specialties that always come in handy around the home. While those activities don't happen much in the urban settings most of us live in, a descendent activity



would be cleanups of overgrown lots or areas for recreational use. The Parks Department of your municipality would be a good place to find out about such efforts, and participating with others could be a way of building out your network in new directions.

Volunteering has the ability to accomplish a number of different objectives, sometimes physical and lasting and sometimes just leading to a sense of self-satisfaction that on your journey through this planet and space that we all share, you have made your mark.

Index of hyperlinks used in this article:

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1	From Ranks of Jobless, a Flood of Volunteers	<a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/16/nyregion/16volunteers.html?_r=3">http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/16/nyregion/16volunteers.html?_r=3</a>
2	volunteernyc.org	<a href="http://www.volunteernyc.org/volunteer/">http://www.volunteernyc.org/volunteer/</a>
3	American Red Cross	<a href="http://www.redcross.org/">http://www.redcross.org/</a>
4	Boy Scouts	<a href="http://www.scouting.org/">http://www.scouting.org/</a>
5	Girl Scouts	<a href="http://www.girlscouts.org/">http://www.girlscouts.org/</a>
6	VolunteerMatch	<a href="http://www.volunteermatch.org/">http://www.volunteermatch.org/</a>
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8	American Red Cross - Give Blood	<a href="http://www.redcross.org/donate/give/">http://www.redcross.org/donate/give/</a>

**THE UNREGOGNIZED ADVOCATE**

By:

Jerrold (Jerry) Clifford, an ETP Network Member

Valentines Day. Not exactly what most of us think of when performing a job search. After all, on Valentines Day we give and receive gifts showing how much we care for others and their feelings for us. Affection is not a term one usually associates with a job search.

But from now on, job networking will remind me a lot of this holiday.

For me, this past Valentines Day will evoke the memory of a very special gift. Not a card. Not a materialistic present. In its' own way, something much more valuable – an important job search nugget from the master job networking guru, Rod Colon.

Rod, a young lady and myself were among a group of over 100 people who had had just attended a networking meeting. In a “meeting after the meeting”, the three of us were relaxing over coffee in a donut store discussing networking issues. I questioned Rod about the best way to handle a particular situation and received an answer based on years of experience.

When applying for a position, it is always (read that as ***ALWAYS***) better to have people inside the target company who can recommend us and champion our cause, than it is to just send in a resume or simply apply online. These folks are called advocates. If we don't happen to have a friend or former business associate who can champion our cause at a targeted company, it often takes some effort to get one. When we do identify an advocate, however, it is important to realize just how valuable their time is. Because they are working, they have an agenda and schedule to follow and goals to meet. If they are championing our cause they are going out of their way for us. They are spending their time and by recommending us to others they may even be putting their credibility or



reputation on the line for us. We don't want them to be embarrassed by promoting us for a non-existent position, or one for which we are not qualified, or one that is no longer available. We owe it to potential advocates to do due diligence. We must ensure that there is a job, that we possess the knowledge and *specific* experience the job requires (not just vague "exposure"), the confidence in ourselves to know we can do the job and a desire to do the job before we contact them. That means research. How do we go about doing this? One effective way is to utilize an often overlooked (and many times intentionally avoided) resource, the HR professional.

There is the perception that HR exists to screen out candidates, so we have to find some way to avoid them, to get around this obstacle to our job offer goal. However, in this economy, with companies laying off so many workers, no business will retain people, or whole departments, which are not viewed as necessary for organization success. Companies have human resource departments because they have determined that specific people-related activities must be performed to support this success. An important HR role is to obtain the best people to perform these activities. HR people know what jobs need to be executed, the requirements for successful job performance, who has accountability for successful performance, and whether there is someone doing the job. In other words, HR knows the details related to the position you want so it makes sense to get the appropriate information from them BEFORE you contact your job specific advocates. Do additional research to locate your HR reference. Call up the targeted company and ask to speak to an HR person who is knowledgeable about the job for which you are interested. If that is not practical, perform a contacting tool (such as LinkedIn) search. Utilize the skills you developed in your career and practiced at networking meetings (coupled with the knowledge you acquired on the Wednesday ETP networking call) to present yourself. Since HR people are charged with getting the best candidates, demonstrate to them that you are the best and you will have an additional advocate on your side.

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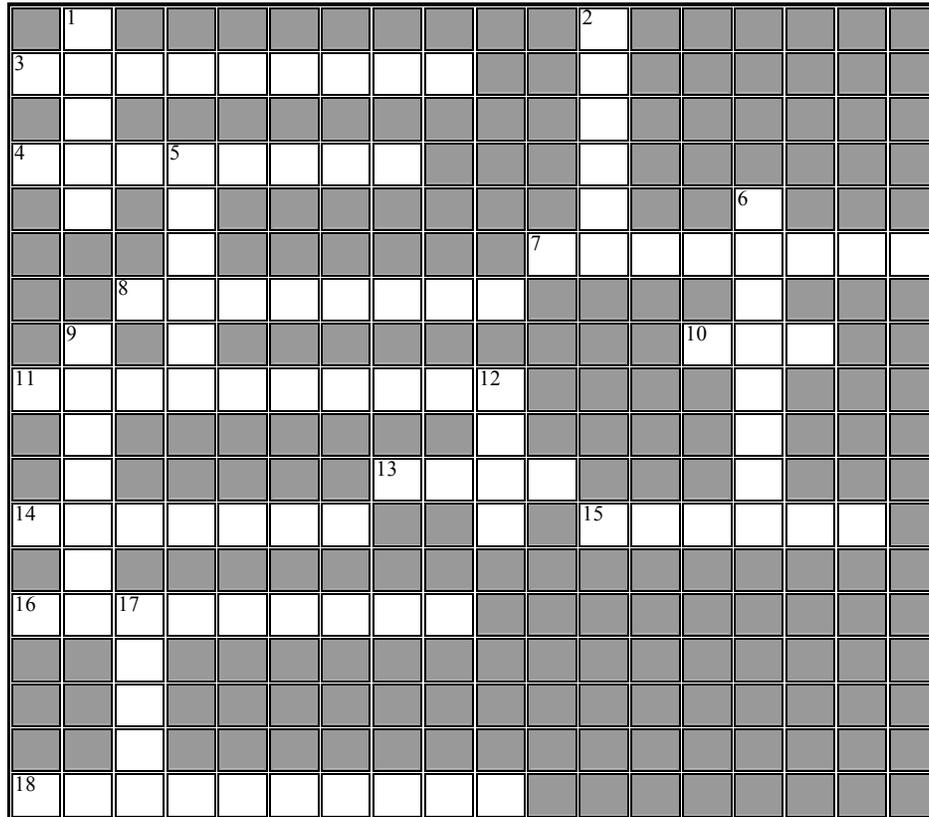
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Jerry is a Project and Program Manager experienced with all aspects of software project development. As both employee and consultant he worked with some of the nation's premier companies including AT&T, Cisco Systems, and Merck. He holds a graduate degree in mathematics, earned certifications in project management and information systems auditing (CISA) and was elected to two terms as President of the EDP Auditors Association, New Jersey Chapter. He is the published author of several technical and non-technical books on topics ranging from computer math to car repair and carpentry.



## Crossword Puzzle

By Rod Colon



### ACROSS

- 3. Join or fasten together usually by something intervening
- 4. Never Eat Alone Author
- 7. Promoting You
- 8. Intrepid boldness
- 10. Object or material on which work is being done
- 11. A person who controls access
- 13. ETP Editor
- 14. Self-imposed objective or purpose
- 15. Profession for which one trains
- 16. A formal consultation usually to evaluate qualifications
- 18. Cultivation of productive relationships

### DOWN

- 1. The Speed of Trust Author
- 2. A trusted counselor or guide
- 5. Curriculum Vitae
- 6. One that supports or promotes the interests of another
- 9. Intense, driving, or conviction
- 12. ETP Leader
- 17 One in which confidence is placed