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What's New in Princeton & Central New Jersey?

Reprinted from the October 12, 2011, issue of U.S. 1 Newspaper

Twice the Support In the Job Search

by Scott Morgan

Finding a new job is a job in itself, and it doesn't help that the rules keep changing. What used to work for job seekers no longer does, especially when you get to middle age. Between the competition and the changing rules of the game, it's easy for job hunters to get confused, down, and unmotivated.



Sandy Schussel

Two free events on Monday and Tuesday, October 17 and 18, intend to reverse the job search blues and keep job hunters positive and motivated. On Monday Sandy Schussel, president of Brass Ring Coaching at 54 Castleton Road, will present "Staying Motivated During the Job Search" at 4:30 p.m. at Salt Creek Grille. Schussel's talk is the lead-in for the HRMA of Princeton's 5:50 networking event. Call 609-986-0230.

Schussel began his career as a lawyer but was sidelined by cancer that left him drained and unable to get back to his law work. But the cancer had one benefit — it gave Schussel time to realize how much he hated being a lawyer. He had lost a lot of clients in his year of chemotherapy treatment and knew he would have to start over again. But why start up again doing something that made him unhappy?

So Schussel, a 1972 graduate of Penn and 1976 graduate of the New England School of Law, traded his life in "a profession filled with unhappy people, long hours, mountains of paperwork, droning work, and endless arguments" for private consulting work. The move was no stretch for Schussel, who had actually set out to be a Broadway actor when he first left Penn. His entire time as a lawyer, he says, he felt as if he were playing a part. And most of the time he had been acting as a consultant anyway.

After several years of leading seminars, consulting, and teaching, Schussel landed a job as a national sales trainer. He loved it, but realized that his real dream was to be a motivational speaker. "That," he told U.S. 1 back in 2002, "is my brass ring."

Schussel formed Brass Ring Coaching that year and realized his dream. The key to getting where you want, he says, is to stay motivated toward your goal. Start by exploring the positive side of who you are as a professional, Schussel says. A consultant might hate prospecting for clients, but might enjoy giving presentations, for example. A lawyer might hate court room wrangles, but might enjoy legal research. Look for elements you like in jobs you have held in the past and build upon them.

Better yet, do them. Keeping your job skills sharp will keep you motivated and will have a pleasant side-effect — it will make you more fluent in the skills and activities you like best.

"The main thing," says Schussel, "is to take action. If you take action, it means that you are not paralyzed."

On Tuesday Nancy Anderson of BlackBird Learning Associates in Bound Brook will present "Job Search Skills for Those Over 40" at 8:30 a.m. at the Princeton Public Library. Call 609-924-9529.

Anderson, who spent 21 years as a training analyst and human resources consultant at Johnson & Johnson, suddenly found herself downsized. Past age 40, she knew she was about to face a daunting job market, but with the help of J&J's outplacement services she learned to retool her resume.

Anderson recommends first and foremost that jobseekers remove the dates of their employment from their resumes. Second, learn to use social media wisely. As much as the over-40 set might be intimidated by LinkedIn or want to dismiss Twitter, the fact is, Anderson says, they work. Social media sites connect professionals with a lot of other professionals, and all it takes is one good connection to help turn things around.

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The image shows the cover of a business directory titled "U.S. 1 BUSINESS DIRECTORY 2009-2010". The cover is primarily blue and green with white text. It features the "U.S. 1" logo at the top left and the title "BUSINESS DIRECTORY 2009-2010" in large, bold letters. There is also a small "PRINCETONINFO.COM" logo at the bottom left of the cover.

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