

Conducting an Attorney Job Search During a Recession – Part 4

By Vanessa Vidal

So now that you have an idea of the route you want to take with your attorney job search, you cannot do this alone, you need a team. How do you find it? By networking.

Oh, no, not that dreadful networking business! I'd rather get back under the covers and pretend that everything's all right. Well, it's not as scary or daunting as it seems, and networking when done right can be a lot of fun.

Put together a team to help you win the race.

I am assuming that by now you have told your closest friends and colleagues about your attorney job search. The key to networking is to dust off your Rolodex, or Internet address book, and start contacting both the people you know well, as well as those you don't know as well.

Yes, this can seem scary and awkward, but trust me you are not alone. Plus remember this: networking is *quid pro quo*. Those people you are contacting would be doing the same thing with you if they were conducting their own job search – or at least you should now expect them to do so in the future.

Let them know about your attorney job search situation, the route you have chosen to take, and determine whether they are willing or able to help you achieve your goal. The key is to sell them on what you bring as much as you would a potential employer. If you can present yourself as a talented and skilled attorney and make a personal connection, you will get much farther with your networking efforts.

The key to networking is to gather information – not necessarily land a job. It is to get the word out, obtain information about the marketplace (who is hiring, not hiring, who knows who and what), and to obtain contacts, and even more contacts. In other words, you need to think of this process as free advertisement and information gathering.

Let as many people know that “John Doe” the best jockey of the West is racing in the Breeders' Cup at Santa Anita. Lucky will be the one ready to sponsor him to win this race! Ok, so I am stretching it a bit here, but hopefully I am making my point clear. You have to generate interest and excitement about your attorney job search, get the word out, and hope that employers will eventually find you, or that you will find them.