

Career Notes



Priscilla H. Claman
President, Career Strategies

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NEWS! Career Strategies, Inc. is happy to report that it has been **certified as a Women's Business Enterprise National Council company**. That means we are officially certified as a women-owned business. This will probably make no difference to our clients who have appreciated our services for years. But to organizations that don't know us, it may be a reason to give us a look, particularly if they are required to report on the number of vendors they have that are minority- or women-owned.

Outsourcing and Career Success

Mergers make a bigger splash on the business pages of the newspapers, but outsourcing can have just as big an impact on careers. Originally outsourcing was just for the lower skilled jobs, like food service or security. Early on it was contract manufacturing. Now it can be any department or function in an organization.

In 1992, James Brian Quinn, in his book *Intelligent Enterprise*, promoted the idea that all but the key, world-class components of an organization be outsourced in order to focus clearly on the firm's special competencies. Now in 2003, more and more companies are doing what he proposed, with varying degrees of success.

The "bet" the outsourcing companies make is that a firm special-

izing in finance, information technology, human resources, manufacturing, etc. can do the function just as well, with more up-to-date processes and at less cost. The outsourcing providers believe they can do everything the company wants and make a profit at the same time.

There is a third player in this game, the outsourcing consultants. They are likely to be brought in to help analyze the potential for outsourcing, choose an outsourcing provider, and help with the transition.

Most people looking for jobs in their professional specialty look for jobs in companies, not in outsourcing providers or outsourcing consultants. They are missing some good career moves! Generally speaking, when you

move from a company to an outsourcing provider, you are making the move from a cost center to a profit center. Yes, "in-house" jobs may appear to be more stable and offer a traditional career path, but rarely do they offer the same investments in professional development as jobs in outsourcing providers. If your career is impacted by outsourcing, these are the choices you need to think through and prepare for.

Thanks to a concerned employer, Karen Liuzzo of Career Strategies coached over 125 IT professionals facing outsourcing. They had the time and the professional advice to think through their options in career terms, not just reacting with anger, fear, or despair.

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Success Stories

The names and some facts about these clients have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

A Consultant Goes In-House

Harper was beginning to burn out. He was his financial consulting firm's leading salesperson, but his territory kept getting bigger and bigger. His goals became harder and harder to meet. The general slowdown in consulting was really hurting his company.

"The best part of my job was helping my clients, but with the pressures of selling all the time, I was just supposed to sell them, not help them," said Harper. "That's just not my style. Now, I don't even have the chance to mentor people or lead projects." He started wondering if this was the right moment for a career change.

"Looking for an in-house job isn't an easy thing to do. You can't solicit the people who know you best, your clients,

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A Human Resources VP Chooses Outsourcing

"I thought I had done it all—both regular employment and contracting. But I didn't know about outsourcing," said Melissa. "I started out to have an in-house HR career, but when I had my son, I worked as a contract recruiter for a couple of years. I noticed the difference immediately. I went to far fewer meetings. I had no projects to manage. I just did my job and went home at the end of the day and didn't worry about anything. People thought I was far more productive than the regular recruiters. Maybe that was true, but I just had recruiting to do.

"I then went back to being a director and then a vice president of human resources. The management shifts and changes in the last five or six years started getting to me. I

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A Consultant Goes In-House

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because that jeopardizes your firm's relationship with them. Then there is the salary difference. Whether it is true for you or not, people expect consultants to make lots more money."

Harper made a point of networking through his colleagues who had left the consulting firm. He assessed his skills and determined what he wanted in a job. He prepared a non-consulting resume and his answers to interview questions. He joined different professional organizations, asked for, and got opportunities to make presentations for them.

Then, he got lucky. Someone told him about an opening. "It had the wrong job title. But it had exactly the right job content and work environment. I would never have considered a job with that title if I hadn't done all that work. Sure, I'm earning less, but I have what I want."

An HR VP Chooses Outsourcing

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began to wonder if I really was making a difference. Besides, in my company, I had no one to talk to or to learn from. I was the person at the top of the ladder, I had the famous 'seat at the table', but I just seemed to be putting out fires all the time.

"Compensation was what I liked best, but I knew I had to beef up my credentials if I wanted to make a move. So, I took a year to do that and to get to know firms that provided compensation services. It worked. I'm now in a firm that provides outsourced compensation. Because of my experience in recruitment, selling or cross-selling wasn't hard for me to learn. And besides, now when I meet HR executives, I can truly say that 'I've been in your shoes'."

Outsourcing

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Some chose retirement; some chose jobs in other departments; some chose to apply to the outsourcing provider or to the company team overseeing the outsourcing provider; some chose to look at other companies. With Karen's help, they took control and prepared for the future. They worked on self-analysis, career reflection, interview preparation and considering options.

The results were overwhelmingly positive—for the IT associates who used the service, for the company and for the outsourcing provider. Associates made career choices, and a high proportion of them got what they wanted. The outsourcing provider got to hire people that were committed to their new jobs and not just choosing by default. And the company managed the transition in a way that maintained productivity and morale.

For a summary of the survey of outplacement program participants, e-mail us at info@career-strategies.com.

Ask...

How to Get
What You Want and
Need at Work

PRISCILLA H. CLAMAN

Available through
www.career-strategies.com
and from Amazon.com.

You may also order by phone
or email. Copies are \$14.95
(MA residents please add 5%
sales tax).

Copies ordered in
conjunction with Career
Strategies workshops are
\$7.50 each.

CareerStrategies, Inc.

1 Beacon Street, Suite 915
Boston, MA 02108

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