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Best Foot Forward

Joy Jung
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With the nation's high unemployment and lingering economic instability, *Best Foot Forward* couldn't come at a better time.

Corporate recruiter Joy Jung focuses primarily on the job seeker who has lost work. She begins with an extensive section on job loss, including a discussion of the "job loss cycle" and the stress associated with being terminated. Some readers may find this material unsettling, but Jung makes an important point: "Until the job seeker has dealt with the job loss in a positive and proactive manner, they will be stymied in their search and landing the next position."

Next, Jung talks about a job seeker's "fit," which she defines as "the candidate's *personal preferences and motivations* in relationship to the specific job and to the corporate culture of the organization." A topic that is usually overlooked, the idea of a job candidate's "fit" is worthy of attention; a poor fit between an individual and a company, writes Jung, is "one of the biggest causes of job dissatisfaction and turnover." To help minimize this, she provides "character circles"—lists of attributes, competencies, interests, hobbies, and job requirements—that job candidates can use to assess whether or not they are a good fit for a particular position.

From this point onward, *Best Foot Forward* is, for the most part, standard fare. Jung discusses networking, creating a résumé, writing cover letters, and handling job interviews. Her approach is to pay careful attention to the psyche of the job seeker. Throughout the book, the author stresses the need to "know yourself," as well as the need to "be realistic, be focused, and be a winner." Rather than simply provide advice on how to find a job, for example, Jung urges the reader to have a positive attitude, demonstrate perseverance and patience, and always be professional.

Best Foot Forward includes appendices with a number of useful tools not commonly found in job-seeker handbooks. There is a "personal stress plan" (a worksheet for stress management), a section on relaxation techniques, a budget worksheet to help the out-of-work person cope with everyday expenses, examples of "elevator speeches" (a brief description of an individual's key work attributes), sample cover and thank-you letters, and more.

Many job-seeker manuals have flooded the market in recent years, and they all tend to cover the same ground, including much of the content found in *Best Foot Forward*

. Still, Jung's book has a number of qualities that make it well worth reading, not the least of which is the author's encouraging, yet realistic, perspective. Individuals who are dealing with job loss will find compassion, wisdom, and sound advice in the pages of this book.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (October 11, 2011)

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