

Job Search: The Total System

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Few experiences inspire more fear and uncertainty than searching for a job. The job seeker questions his own competence experience and usefulness to prospective employers while the specter of rejection looms over every phone call e-mail and interview.

Into this punishing scenario enter *Job Search: The Total System*. Veteran career counselors Kenneth and Sheryl Dawson share the fruits of their experience counseling job candidates. And the fruits are plentiful: Kenneth has coached job seekers for more than thirty years while Sheryl an author and speaker boasts an MBA and currently serves as CEO and chairman of Dawson Consulting Group.

Job Search is full of useful information. Step-by-step the Dawsons counsel the reader in each phase of his job search: assessing his current situation considering self-employment crafting a resume preparing references networking regarding search firms with a healthy dose of realism finding job leads interviewing and finally negotiating.

Although the Dawsons provide pages of no-nonsense wisdom to guide the job hunter in such necessary tasks as writing the ideal resume *Job Search* is more than merely a how-to manual. In fact most of its value lies in its ability to inspire the reader. In the chapter on the daunting subject of networking the Dawsons state "If you can talk you can do it. Cold-calling on the phone is very difficult initially but it's a learnable doable skill."

Indeed inspiring the reader is quite necessary given the arduous task the Dawsons set before him. They do not simply expect him to find any job; they want him to find the *best* job. As a successful job hunter they write "[y]our route will be more difficult in the short term. It will require large measures of courage confidence perseverance and dedication. But your upstream direction will lead to what smart campaigners are looking for—the best jobs." In support of this statement the Dawsons provide several testimonial letters supporting the effectiveness of their advice.

While *Job Search* is very useful it suffers from a couple of minor drawbacks. A few typographical errors and unfortunately worded sentences require double-takes and the authors' frequent references to their company and its Web site lend the book a pronounced sales-pitch feel. However these quirks are minor liabilities when compared to the value *Job Search* offers to the job hunter.

The Dawsons' frank assessment of job hunting as difficult and tiring provide a foundation of realism upon which to build the reader's hope and enthusiasm. Armed with information and an effective strategy for his job search the reader will likely find the strength to take control of his career and his future.

MELANIE SEIBERT (January 9, 2009)

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