

# CareerSmart Advisor™

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

## A Note From Dave

Employees have long recognized the rewards of volunteering; the chance to share their skills and expertise with those who really need it is always a fulfilling experience.

Fortunately, companies are getting more involved in the volunteer experience these days. According to a recent news article reported by The Associated Press entitled *Companies See Volunteering as a Benefit*, organizations are more actively granting employees the time they need to volunteer. Some are even creating company-organized volunteering opportunities.

Companies are finding that they can link these volunteer programs to their overall business objectives. The article, for example, notes how employees of dog food maker Pedigree can volunteer at animal shelters as part of that company's program.

Organizations are also using volunteering as an employee retention strategy, since it undoubtedly improves company morale. It's also an initiative in which members of our current multi-generational workforce share an interest. In the article, David Eisner, chief executive of the Corporation for National and Community Service, notes how the younger members of the workforce use volunteering to help achieve their desired work-life balance. At the same time, older workers just enjoy the opportunity to serve their communities.

Volunteering is a positive action for both companies and their employees. Yet, we can't forget that the true beneficiaries, of course, are the recipients of this good will.

Sincerely,



Dave Opton  
ExecuNet Founder & CEO  
[www.execunet.com/davesblog](http://www.execunet.com/davesblog)



## Finding an International Career and Culture Fit

By Marji McClure

**W**hat many executives are beginning to realize is that some of the strongest talent they are competing against for C-level positions is currently working at desks in another country. What they may not yet understand is that they can gain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace by claiming their own desks in that country.

If your desk is currently situated in the C-suite or if you aspire to the top job, having an international position on your résumé could certainly help you advance your career at your current company and make you more marketable to future organizations. International experience in today's global marketplace is becoming more of a "need to have" skill rather than a "nice to have" one.

But the road to international career success is certainly a challenging one. Of course, necessary requirements of accepting — and succeeding in — an international post are the possession of strong overall leadership skills (including peak performance in your specific job function) and an in-depth knowledge of your industry and its challenges. Such capabilities are obviously transferable regardless of job location. However, they provide a solid foundation for any executive ready to test his career in international waters.

Yet, they are not nearly as powerful if they are not combined with a strong cultural awareness of a foreign land. An executive can be the best leader in his native land, but this doesn't guarantee him instant success overseas. Executives must know how to communicate their goals and visions and implement them in a way that is understood and accepted by a global workforce. If, as an executive, you truly wish to compete among your peers from Japan, for example, you must understand how they accomplish their business objectives; not just how you accomplish your own.

"Executives need to prepare themselves from a technical viewpoint of having expertise in their functional area as well as everything you expect an executive to offer in terms of leadership, knowledge, the ability to develop consensus, and appreciate how to integrate the needs and priorities of the different decision-making coalitions," says Debra Feldman, a Connecticut-based executive talent agent and job search consultant.

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FastTrack Programs  
February/March 2008  
Hosted by Dave Opton,  
founder and CEO, ExecuNet

- 2/19 — **Finding the Job You Want When You are Over 50** — Jean Walker
- 2/21 — **How to Love Networking** — Gail Sussman Miller
- 2/22 — **FREE PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS — For Executives Only, Part 2 — A No-Nonsense Approach to Interviewing** — Bill Belknap
- 2/28 — **Dare to Be Different: The Key to Finding a C-Level Job Faster** — Tucker Mays & Bob Sloane
- 2/29 — **Converting Interviews to Offers Using DISC** — Linda Dominguez
- 3/6 — **The Next Level: What Insiders Know About Executive Success** — Scott Eblin
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- 3/21 — **FREE PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS — Clinch the Deal with a Super Sales Presentation** — Rochelle Togo-Figa

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- 2/19 — **Houston** — Michael Grove
- 2/19 — **Irvine (Orange County)** — Mark James
- 2/20 — **Charlotte** — Merton Marsh & Michael Hall
- 2/21 — **Washington, DC** — Peter McCarthy
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- 2/21 — **Freehold/Howell** — Rod Colon
- 2/21 — **Palo Alto** — Bobbie LaPorte
- 2/21 — **Pittsburgh/Cranberry Township** — Vince Papi
- 2/21 — **Indianapolis** — Romona Camarata
- 2/22 — **Detroit Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Marge Larsen
- 2/25 — **Boston** — Marg Balcom
- 2/25 — **Raleigh/Durham** — Stuart Levine
- 2/26 — **Washington, DC Sr. Executive Roundtable** — Peter McCarthy
- 2/26 — **Chicago** — Melody Camp
- 2/27 — **Denver** — Karen Armon
- 2/27 — **Toronto** — Martin Buckland
- 2/28 — **Columbia-Maryland** — Ed Loucks
- 2/28 — **Los Angeles** — Eileen Hupp
- 2/28 — **Columbus** — Janine Moon
- 2/28 — **Atlanta Sr. Executive Roundtable** — J. Patrick Haly
- 2/28 — **Dallas** — Bob Hueglin
- 2/29 — **St. Louis** — Ken Coleman & Randy Hove
- 3/4 — **San Diego/Carlsbad** — Mark James

Registration information can be found at [members.execunet.com/e\\_network\\_results.cfm](http://members.execunet.com/e_network_results.cfm)

## Your Career Advisor

# How to Network the Way You Shop

By Gail Sussman Miller

Are you an executive who is uncomfortable with networking? Do you avoid going to networking events even though you've heard countless times how it is THE best way to get a new job, promote your business, find new opportunities, and get help to meet your goals? Well, you are not alone. For executives, it may seem that the higher you go in organizations or the higher you set your sights, the tougher it is to figure out how to find the time to network, where to start if it's been a long time since you were out there, and how to choose the best places to meet the people you want to meet.

Some worry about how to start conversations, what to say, whether they are interesting enough or impressive enough. In short, many of us fear rejection. Many believe they have to be an extrovert to succeed, must make a lot of small talk, impose on others with a forced sales pitch, and collect at least 10 business cards before they can make a break for the door.

All you need is to use your natural skills and a mindset you already have to design networking that fits your style.

### Redefine Networking

What if I told you that you don't need a personality transplant or take extrovert pills? The answer is all in your head. To help you shift your thinking, try on my definition of networking: "Networking is simply connecting with like-minded people for the greater good in service of common objectives."

### Shift Your Mindset By Using Shopping as a Tool

We are going to reframe the way you think about networking by helping you transfer to networking the decision-making skills, attitude and success you

use when you shop. You probably don't realize how many instinctive, easy decisions and thought processes you use while shopping. We all have our own style and preferred methods.

### Look at Networking the Way You Would Shop for a Book

Think back to the last time you wanted a new book to read for pleasure. The process began with a need for something; in this case, reading entertainment.

As I describe a typical book shopping approach, notice your natural instincts and personal preferences. In the back of your mind, apply this same process to your desire to network to achieve a specific outcome. See how you might use the same selection and decision-making processes for your choices on where, when and with whom to network.

It's important to observe your motivation to make clear the type of experience you want. Do you want a book to help you learn a new skill, escape in a novel, or go deeper on a subject you love? It helps to do some advance thinking, a little research, and have a general goal or outcome in mind.

### It's Time to Go Shopping

Let's say you choose to buy a mystery novel with twists and turns to keep you guessing. You go to your favorite local bookstore armed with your desired outcome and an awareness of mystery writers and books that have entertained you in the past.

You reach the mystery section and start browsing. You review titles and authors, and notice the color, size, shape and thickness of the books you see. You pull a book out, skim the synopsis and reviews on the book jacket to learn more. If that cursory level of exploration captures your interest, you may open the book and review the table of contents

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and even leaf through a chapter.

As you scan the pages, you are unconsciously asking yourself, “Do I like this author’s writing style, language and pacing?” “Is there enough suspense and intrigue in this story to keep my attention?” “Is the main character someone I want to get to know and care about?”

All the while, the “Happy Meter” in your gut, your intuition, is giving you signals that encourage you to either decide to buy this book or to keep browsing. Ultimately, you will choose a book that meets your needs.

## Reframing Your Attitude and Mindset

Let’s apply your book shopping process to networking. See how you can reframe your existing attitudes and mindset about networking by considering that meeting people and choosing to hear their stories can be as easy and fun as shopping for a book.

You could literally reread the paragraphs above, about buying a book, and apply the decision-making and approach to shopping for people connections, relationships and “living” knowledge. Let’s review: First, you need to know what you are looking for. What do you want to accomplish and/or experience that could benefit from the help of others? You might need a job, want to grow your business, find new philanthropic organizations to support, or have stimulating conversations to generate new ideas for your life.

The rest of the process so closely mirrors book shopping that you might be surprised. After defining your interests, you can then choose the best, most enjoyable approach for shopping and match it with your style for connecting with people. Do you want to meet people online or in person? In large, medium or small groups? Or do you want to meet individuals over coffee or by phone?

Imagine attending a networking event to “shop” for connections that fit your needs the same way you went book shopping. Knowing your search “category” helps determine what networking events to attend. Let’s say you are actively looking for a new job and plan to attend a business-

## How to Love Networking

Presented by Gail Sussman Miller on Thursday, February 21, 2008, 3:00 to 4:30 PM ET

Networking is a natural extension of who you are and what you love to do. Are you an executive who thinks that.....?

- You know networking is a powerful way to accomplish business goals, but hate the thought of making time to go to those events and walk into a room full of strangers.
- You’ve let your networks disintegrate, and you are out of practice.
- You’re too shy or introverted, and that you don’t have the “right” skills or personality.
- You don’t even know where or how to start networking.

When you attend this interactive program, you’ll learn how to effortlessly network as a natural extension of who you are and what you love to do. Join Gail Sussman Miller as she outlines a fun and creative four-step process that will teach you how to:

- Transfer your natural skills and success from an activity you love to networking.
- Discover a powerful metaphor and broadened mindset for connecting with others.
- Increase your confidence and comfort attending networking events and identify ways to design your own.
- Authentically create and sustain more meaningful relationships to achieve your goals and discover unexpected opportunities.

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oriented networking event with about 50 people in attendance. Are you ready?

## Opening a Book; Starting a Conversation

As you survey the room, view the people in attendance as if they are books. The truth is we all do judge others on first glance based on appearances. It’s an instinctive protective measure. Just notice and then suspend your judgments. Let them go and choose to be curious and open-minded. Skim the “books” in the room and look at their jacket covers, and approach someone you are curious to explore.

As you introduce yourself, you hear the titles and authors of all these life stories. Follow your interest to preview the table of contents of the people you meet to find out just enough to know what you have in common, if you relate to the theme of their story, and if their messages intrigue you enough to learn more. Do they work in the field you are interested in? Can they offer any advice or introductions on your behalf?

Follow your instincts and listen to the signals from your internal Happy Meter to “read” more of the stories of the people with whom you connect well. Share your story and find out what you might do for others and how their experiences can help

you. If your interest is high, ask for a business card and initiate a future conversation to delve more deeply into a chapter or two. Your shopping trip is a success when you make a meaningful connection that may serve one or both of you and holds your interest for further conversation.

## The Next Chapter: Successful Networking

Take your book shopping habits and process along the next time you are networking. Be clear about what you want and like. Browse potential connections with an open mind. Bring your shopping list of goals and outcomes with you and give peoples’ stories a chance to unfold to see if you have a good fit.

You are the author of your story, your book. Choose your people connections in the free, easy, natural way you choose a good book and create all the adventure, mystery, success and happiness you desire so your story ends the way you want it to. ■

*Gail Sussman Miller, Chief Obstacle Buster at Inspired Choice, specializes in teaching women solopreneurs and company teams how to love obstacles and overcome them through reframing. Sussman Miller can be contacted at [HowToLoveNetworking.com](http://HowToLoveNetworking.com), where her networking tips are available.*

## International Career

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“In addition, they need to have a real sensitivity and their antenna out for the fact that interactions are going to be influenced by cultural differences,” adds Feldman. “People are coming to the table with a different set of expectations of what is acceptable and what is right or wrong.”

### Testing the International Waters

Are you ready for such a challenge? The first step in deciding if you would ever want to accept an international position is to cautiously test your cross-cultural capabilities without leaving your current office or company. For a U.S.-based executive, one way to test those waters without stepping on a plane is to get a job with a European company that has offices based in the U.S., suggests Feldman.

Another option is to leave the office and travel to a particular region on business, says Jeff Kaye, president and CEO of Kaye/Bassman International, a retained search firm in Plano, Texas. This is a good way in which to become familiar with how business works in that country and get used to the environment. If you want to then investigate actual career opportunities at that point, international search firms (based in the U.S.) and those based in countries in which you would like to work can help you identify potential job openings.

### A Sign of Trust, Confidence

Executives who take on international assignments are either recruited into such a post by their current employer or they find such an opportunity with a new organization. Either way, executives must demonstrate the confidence to lead in any culture. For the executive being transferred by his employer, he already has. He is also already comfortable with the company's overall corporate culture.

If you're tapped for an international position by your current employer, consider it a true sign of confidence. “Most companies will move somebody they will trust in an outpost,” says Brian Drum, CEO of Drum Associates, a New York

### Before You Go: What You Need to Know

While companies around the globe share the same overall objective — successful completion of their goals — their paths to reaching that point certainly differ. Knowing as much as possible about how they operate (in both strategy and emotion) in various regions is key. Here is a guide to get you started on your research:

#### Results-Oriented Cultures:

- North America
- Northern Europe
- U.K.
- Australia
- New Zealand

#### Relationship-Focused Cultures:

- Arab world
- Asia
- Most of Africa and Latin America

#### Very Expressive Cultures:

- The Mediterranean region
- Latin Europe
- Latin America

#### Reserved Cultures:

- East and Southeast Asia
- Nordic and Germanic Europe

**Sources:** *Cross-Cultural Business Behavior* by Richard R. Gesteland and *The Conference Board's 2008 Executive Coaching Conference* (From the session entitled: Designing, Leading and Managing the Practice: The Implications for Coaching Across the Globe.)

“

If you're tapped for an international position by your current employer, consider it a true sign of confidence.

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City-based global executive search firm. “The international move is an expensive one. They're going to be looking for success and payback. That's the reason you're going.”

Andy Wong, executive director of 104China, a human resources consulting firm in Shanghai, China, concurs that the trust factor is a main reason why companies will transfer executives from one region to another. “Companies are more willing to relocate [executives] to oversee [an international operation] than hire someone fresh off the street who doesn't have the network back in corporate,” says Wong. “They know you.”

In this scenario, your company is certain that you have the skills and capabilities to succeed abroad. But you also have

to be certain you have those skills in place. “[Executives] need to know the management expertise that is needed over there [in an international location] and the technical skills,” adds Wong.

Wong served as a business development manager for Ashland Inc. in Santa Clara, Calif. for three years before being transferred by the company to Taiwan in 2001. “I was sent to Taiwan because I had the local skills and the local knowledge,” he says. He also had corporate knowledge. “When I moved out to Taiwan, any time I had a problem, I could call back [to Santa Clara] and I knew the right guy to talk to, because I built the relationships,” says Wong. “That's a network the local employees don't have.”

### Securing an International Post: The Discovery Process

For executives contemplating an international post at a new company, there is a bit more uncertainty because they naturally don't know as much about a new company's overall culture. Executives seeking an international assignment need to gather as much, or more, information about a potential employer and corporate culture than they would when researching one in their native land. They also need to learn as much as possible about the

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## International Career

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local region's cultural nuances — how they do business and how it may differ from processes they are accustomed to. Due diligence under these circumstances is crucial.

“During the interview process, they don't want to just meet the bosses and direct reports,” says Feldman. “They need to scour the organization and get a sense of the place.” For instance, if it's a manufacturing company, they should walk the plant floor to see how people work, advises Feldman, who suggests also asking the human resources representatives about their goals to improve the working conditions.

One of the most obvious obstacles executives can face is a language barrier. But how important is it for executives to know the language of a foreign land in order to work there? Opinion is mixed on the answer, and sometimes it depends on the region. Many countries do speak predominantly English, while others do not. Feldman notes how communicating in a store is different from communicating at a business meeting, and advises against enlisting the help of translators because they may not be able to communicate

### Expert Resources:

Brian Drum, Drum Associates ([DrumAssociates.com](http://DrumAssociates.com))

Debra Feldman, JobWhiz ([JobWhiz.com](http://JobWhiz.com))

Jeff Kaye, Kaye/Bassman International ([kbic.com](http://kbic.com))

Chandan Pant, DKP Solutions ([DKPSolutions.com](http://DKPSolutions.com))

Andy Wong, 104China ([awong@chicagogsb.edu](mailto:awong@chicagogsb.edu))

your points as precisely as you would on your own.

### Acclimating to a New Culture

Even before an executive is in place at his new position in a new land (either in an outpost of his current employer or within a completely new organization), the acclimation process must begin. While executives start such positions already armed with superior leadership and management skills, the reality is their business knowledge won't be enough to help them succeed in a foreign land. They need to acquire a deep knowledge of the cultural nuances of their adoptive country in order to truly be successful. Experts agree that this is especially challenging because countries — as well as regions within the counties — can oftentimes have very unique cultural differences. Research is not an option, but a must.

Experts agree that some form of coaching or mentoring can also help

executives overcome any cultural obstacles and become successful leaders in an international setting. “You have to rely on people who are more familiar with the environment and culture,” says Feldman. Kaye concurs that a close confidant is an important relationship to create as soon as possible. “The best thing is to get a right arm [assistant] assigned to you to give the lay of the land,” says Kaye. He adds that a business consultant could also be helpful.

“Executives want to instill the same corporate culture across the world,” says Wong. “You have to be yourself, but you have to be culturally sensitive.” Immersing themselves in their new culture is really the only way in which to accomplish this.

Networking within a new region can also help an executive become acclimated to his new country. “Executives can create an international network by getting connected with executives in similar roles in different locations,” says Chandan Pant, a senior HR recruitment consultant for DKP Solutions, an executive search firm in New Delhi, India. Yet, Wong says that networking can be more challenging in a foreign land. He suggests speaking at conferences and volunteering for community work to help build a network.

### Building a Global Team

As an executive becomes comfortable in her new role and surroundings, her attention has to turn toward her team — either building one or maintaining the team she inherited. Experts say that traditional methods, such as networking and local job boards, are effective strategies regardless of your location. Kaye says there is an abundance of headhunters overseas, including thousands who are sole proprietors in Asia. “The best recruited talent is local. Local

### Cultural Business Etiquette — Some Do's and Don'ts

Business etiquette certainly varies from country to country. Many behaviors and actions that are acceptable in one country could be deal-breakers in another. It's vital that executives understand such nuances before conducting any business in a foreign land. Here are some examples of cultural rules that are important to know:

#### China:

- Avoid large hand movements.
- Don't point while speaking.
- Don't put your hand in your mouth.
- Don't discuss business at meals.

#### Japan:

- Give and receive business cards with both hands.
- Don't write on business cards or place them in a pocket or wallet.
- Japanese people don't like to say “no.” They will say “yes” even if they mean “no.”
- Don't pour your own drinks.

#### Spain:

- Business cards are two-sided. One is English; the other is Spanish.
- Negotiations are usually lengthy processes.
- Doors are usually shut during business meetings.
- Business meetings are often conducted over lunches and dinners.

#### India:

- Never refuse an invitation. Instead, say “I'll try.”
- Use professional business titles.

*Source: The International Business Etiquette and Manners website ([Cyborlink.com](http://Cyborlink.com))*

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## Insider Insight

# The Seven Greatest Challenges for Executive Job Seekers and How to Overcome Them

By Tucker Mays and  
Bob Sloane

**S**enior-level executives have the most daunting task of all job seekers as they compete with thousands of other highly qualified candidates for a limited number of opportunities, and while American and global businesses continue to consolidate. During our 12 years of counseling executives in transition, we have determined the seven toughest hurdles they face, and identified the most effective ways to overcome them.

### Not Working

Unfortunately, the bias against executives in transition has not gone away. On average, 15 percent or fewer of the candidates recruiters propose to their clients are unemployed. Clients and recruiters are more comfortable interviewing executives who don't have to defend their disengagement, and are generally considered lower-risk hires. Executives who have been unemployed for more than six months have an even more difficult time finding a new job, because the market senses that they are even less in demand.

Executives in transition must work harder in job search than their working competitors who wish to move. They should have a convincing story explaining why they left their former company; target only those companies in sectors that have the greatest interest in their skills and experience; learn how to become excellent interviewers; and network six hours a day to reach 100 new contacts per month.

Unemployed executives have one major advantage over their working peers in a job search — free time. They can network far more broadly and effectively. Networking continues to be the most important tool in executive job search, leading directly to more than 75 percent of jobs.

### Age

If you are approaching 50 or have passed this milestone, you will encounter stiff resistance in the job market. America continues to favor younger candidates, and most mid- to large-sized companies believe younger executives have greater energy, drive, current skills and growth potential. Many also have succession plans with younger internal stars ready to fill vacated senior-level positions.

While you can't change the year you were born, you can control how you present yourself to the job market. Dress less conservatively, stay in shape, eat healthy foods and exude enthusiasm. Regular exercise not only reduces excess weight, it is an excellent stress reducer, and promotes a positive attitude.

Older executives have an important advantage over their younger competition — experience. Having faced and solved more business problems, they are in a better position to more quickly and accurately identify the key drivers impacting performance and initiate solutions faster. Stressing this point in networking and interviews can greatly facilitate a job search.

### Focus

Most executives believe casting a wide net to a range of jobs maximizes their search. Their rationale is that there are only a limited number of jobs available at any given time, so it seems wise to leave no stone unturned. This is a serious mistake.

We have found that the tighter the job focus, the shorter the search. Executives must focus on target companies and sectors that research has confirmed have the highest probability of interest in them. Trying to reach others is usually an expensive waste of time that diverts their attention away from potential jobs they have a far greater chance of obtaining.

The best way to arrive at a focused

job objective is to answer the question, "What do I enjoy most and do best that is needed most and by which companies today?" The nexus of your top skills and the companies that have the greatest need for them defines your job search goal. This may sound obvious, but we have observed more executives than we can count who have wasted precious time and money not following this critical strategy.

Another important reason for a tight job search focus is that it conveys decisiveness. Leadership is the most sought-after skill in a senior executive, and decisiveness is its most critical component. An unfocused search portrays indecisiveness. Recruiters and hiring authorities believe that candidates who aren't crystal clear about what they want to do next may be equally ambivalent about the right direction for a business.

### Positioning

Job search is a marketing game, and job seekers who market themselves most effectively gain the best jobs faster. Marketing is the art and science of creating demand, and positioning creates a distinctive identity and clearly communicates the brand's unique benefits. To position themselves properly, job seekers must first determine which of their skills are most applicable to their target market, and then identify a special talent or talents which few others possess.

As we tell our clients, "Skills get the interview, but talent gets the job." Passing that hurdle generally leads to an interview with a recruiter or company. Going beyond that and successfully communicating unique talents related to the job opportunity can provide the value-add that strengthens your candidacy. While strategic planning is a skill, identifying market opportunities others

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miss and consistently launching successful new products are talents. Every successful brand has a unique identity. What is yours?

### Job Hopping

It is a rare senior executive in transition who doesn't have to explain or often defend certain career choices. The best way to explain short job tenures is to be honest and positive about the reasons for disengagement. Explain each job change in the context of a well-considered career plan or circumstances beyond your control.

Some valid reasons for leaving a company are a merger where your job was made redundant; the elimination of your position in a downsizing; no further chance of promotion; reaching the end of the learning curve; or significant changes in job description.

In our experience, the best way to explain this résumé challenge is to state that your career choices were based on a great deal of thought supported by trusted advisors who considered the move as in your best interest and the most advantageous avenue to career growth. It is very often not what you did that is important, but how you talk about it. Strive to illustrate that you're an executive who didn't just react to career events, but chose them with an ultimate goal in mind.

### The "Eclectic Career Path"

Many executives have worked in a variety of industries and positions that can often be construed as examples of inconsistency and poor career decisions. The most effective way to obviate this challenge is to communicate the common threads throughout your career during which you have successfully applied your skills and talents. Common threads can be a signature approach to problem solving, outstanding people management, application of classic branding tactics, and innovative ways to grow core businesses. These capabilities can transcend and be leveraged across multiple industries, which allow you to legitimately entertain opportunities outside of your last industry and demonstrate unique talents of flexibility

## Dare to be Different: The Key to Finding C-Level Jobs Faster

Presented by Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane on Thursday, February 28, 2008,

1:00 to 2:30 PM ET

Is your job search taking longer than it should? Most senior executives take far too long to find a new position, and this interactive program teaches you how to avoid the common mistakes that can delay your search, and gives you proven techniques you can apply to help you find your next job faster.

Noted executive career coaches Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane will show you how to:

- Define your unique value.
- Target the best type of situation.
- Conduct a proactive, multi-channel search.
- Expand your networking to cold contacts.
- Adjust or change course as needed.

Learn how to stand out from other C-level candidates. Find out why it's so important to:

- Focus on your talents more than your skills.
- Concentrate on networking with recruiters and target company decision-makers.
- Ask great questions, rather than give good answers.
- Know more about contacts and companies than your fellow candidates.

Registration information can be found at [www.execunet.com/fasttrack](http://www.execunet.com/fasttrack)

and adaptability. You are now converting perceived weaknesses into strengths.

### Transitioning from Larger to Smaller Companies

Many senior executives have enjoyed steady career growth in large corporations. But the time often comes when big companies no longer need or want you. If terminated, most executive job seekers should seek positions in smaller companies rather than try to return to the big jobs they once held.

There are several reasons to follow this new course. Smaller companies are far less likely to reject you because of some of the "résumé" challenges discussed earlier. They are grateful that someone with your outstanding training and experience can apply that proven discipline to their emerging business. Also, there are 20 times as many companies under \$500 million in sales in the U.S. than above, so many more job opportunities exist.

However, it is not easy to make this transition even if it is often the wisest choice. Small companies often think large company candidates need larger staffs, greater resources and more time to make decisions than they can or are willing to provide. First, explain why you wish to make this career change, and then give

examples from your previous experience that confirms you can do it.

For example, say you wish to make the move because you believe you have already demonstrated strong cross-functional leadership, want greater impact on results, find it takes too long to get things done, and want to be in a more flexible environment that can be more responsive to market dynamics. Cite examples where you led project teams in one-off, "intrapreneurial" assignments that required cross-functional coordination, quick decisions and limited resources.

Executive job search is one of life's most difficult and demanding challenges. However, for every one of its greatest hurdles, there are proven ways to overcome them. With this knowledge, the executive job seeker can develop a realistic search plan that results in gaining an excellent job at a considerable savings in both time and money. ■

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*Co-founded by Tucker Mays and Bob Sloane, OptiMarket LLC is an executive counseling service, working exclusively with both currently employed and in-transition senior-level executives whose compensation is \$200K and above. Mays and Sloane can be contacted at 203-921-0322 or at [OptiMarketLLC.com](http://OptiMarketLLC.com)*

## International Career

*Continued from page 5*

talent can teach a U.S. [executive] more,” says Kaye.

“If they want to position themselves for success, executives have to surround themselves with the right resources,” says Feldman. “They have to be smart enough to know what they need and know what they need to know.”

The equation gets a bit more complicated when your direct reports work in a different country, with perhaps a different work ethic. So a complete understanding of your employees’ culture and environment is also very important.

Feldman says, in these circumstances, face time is important. Executives need to act more like superiors who are located in the same region — and office. It’s vital to ensure employees don’t feel like they are literally alone on an island. “Executives need to be prepared to show up when there is a crisis,” says Feldman. “It’s not enough to send emails. It’s that spontaneity that deepens the feelings of trust.”

### Your Global Future

For many executives, their future after an international assignment has much promise. They can bring their skills to another company seeking to “go global” and overall, their international experience makes them more marketable in an increasingly more global workforce. “An expansion to a better market for any firm would be beneficial and [an executive] can show how beneficial it is to [transition] to

Here is a sampling of some of ExecuNet’s current international job postings:

Job Title	Location	Industry/Job Function
Business Development Manager	Europe	Operational Support Systems
CEO	Moscow	Consumer Electronics
COO	France	Management Consulting
Director of Engineering	Germany	Plant Engineering and Construction
Finance Director	Scotland	Information Technology
Sales Executive	London	Finance
Managing Director (Europe/Mid-East/Asia)	Europe	Management Consulting
Senior Manager, Industrial Design	Paris	Consumer Products
VP, Product Management	Czech Republic	Security Software
VP, Sourcing	Paris	Consumer Products

To find more information about these and other job postings, select “Find Jobs” on the ExecuNet member homepage.

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Their future after an international assignment has much promise. They can bring their skills to another company seeking to “go global.”

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a global scenario,” says Pant.

“Once you develop the experience, you might be able to offer an organization that seeks to move to that area the understanding of what it will take to be able to do it from scratch,” says Kaye.

“When you get back, you tend to stand out,” adds Wong. “[For instance],

you’ve brought back an Asian perspective, an Asian experience. You built a local network [in that region].”

Yet, Feldman cautions that not all international assignments can end well; and executives must be aware of that in order to avoid a letdown at the end of their tour of duty.

“Out of sight, out of mind,” says Feldman, of perhaps one of the scariest aspects of an international assignment for any executive. “If you’re too far from the home office, you might not be recognized for what you’re doing,” she says. “Executives have to be their own champions and [illustrate] what it took to get those results and the actions behind them. You may be overseas and may be viewed as indispensable and not be given another assignment. The company is not going to manage your career. You have to make sure that happens.” ■

## CareerSmart Advisor

Strategies & Solutions for Your Career Success

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