



## The **TOP 5 AH-HA! MOMENTS** That Empower and Mobilize Job Seekers

Over the last 20+ years I have been coaching professionals who are in career transition - either by choice, or by circumstances. Many are stuck by an inability to know where to start, or are frustrated by weeks of searching with very few, if any, positive results.

Nothing gives me greater pleasure than that moment during a coaching session when the light clicks on and my client exclaims, "I never thought of it that way!" Even over the phone I can sense the tone of their voice change. Suddenly, they sound more empowered and energized. They light up!

If your job search is going nowhere and you would welcome some AH-HA moments of your own, read on!



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# AH-HA! #1

## Being “Open” is Killing Your Job Search

Have you been approaching your job search like a holiday shopper, aimlessly surfing the net and wandering the malls? You have no clear idea of what you are looking for, but you are certain you will know it when you see it. But with so many websites to view and so many stores to visit, that endless shopping around feels utterly futile. Frustrated, and often times demoralized, you begin to doubt your gift-selecting abilities and deem yourself a failure.



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Nothing kills a job search campaign faster than answering the question, “What kind of job are you looking for?” with any of the following statements:

- 1** I’m open.
- 2** I’ll do most anything.
- 3** I prefer to not box myself in.

If you have been approaching your job search with the same mindset, stop right here!

It’s a universal truth that the clearer you are about what you want, the quicker you will find it.

Take time to visualize your ideal company and job. Where is it geographically located? What services or products does the company provide? What are the people like who work there? What skills and experience do you currently have that you would like to take to your next job? How do you see yourself spending your day?

Keep drilling down to the specifics. Create a vision that is so real you would swear that you are already there.

### **Empowering Reality:**

Opportunities are everywhere if you can just know and truly believe that “if you can see it, you can be it.”

If you are having trouble doing this, [hire a career coach](#).



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# AH-HA! #2

## Your Résumé is Not an Obituary of Your Career

- Did you include every job you ever had on your résumé – dating back to when you graduated from high school or college?
- Has your career path been less than smooth, with multiple job changes, periods of unemployment, or numerous positions and responsibilities that seem unrelated?
- Are you trying to include all of the content on one or two pages by making the font and margins really, really small?
- Have you included jobs that you hated and skills that are no longer relevant?

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<b>PUBLICATIONS:</b>	1. Mubolola V. Brook M.D., James Heman M.D., Rex Yung M.D., Craig Hooker M.P.H., Peter Professional, B.S. "Can ST Segment-TQ Changes Differentiate Myocardial Infarction From Myocarditis?" <i>Annals of Thoracic Surgery</i> , Vol.80, 1241-1247, 2005. 2. Mubolola V. Brook M.D., Craig M. Hooker, M.P.H., Emil Oroschowski, M.D., Ph.D., Yu Hua, B.S., Maughon Gao, M.D., Ph.D., Peter Professional, B.S. "2004 Myocardial Infarction and ST-TQ Changes in Dog Lung Cancer" <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i> , Vol.355, 1118-1128, 2006.

An effective résumé is a customized **marketing document**, tailored to a specific industry, employer and job. It's strategically focused and only includes relevant information. In 30-seconds or less, it tells the reader "This is who I am...this is what I do... and this is what I can do for you."

If you're still "Open" then you aren't ready to write your résumé. Go back to **AH-HA! #1**.

**Empowering Reality:** It's your résumé/your marketing document. You are empowered to include only the relevant information and put a different spin on what might appear to be unrelated experience.

If you don't know how to do this, [hire someone who does](#).



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## AH-HA! #3

### You Have a Lot of Marketable Skills and Accomplishments

Think about how you might answer the following questions:



Image courtesy of Stuart Miles / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

- What are your 3 strongest job skills/areas of expertise?
- What problems are you best at solving?
- What words do others use to describe you?
- If there were only 3 things you could share with an employer about your knowledge, skills, abilities, talents and background, what would they be?
- What do you believe sets you apart from other professionals with similar skills and backgrounds?

A job seeker once told me that he never accomplished anything. In fact, he said a “trained monkey” could do his job. If you have at times felt this way, then listen up!

- Even if no one ever took the time to point out and document all you have accomplished in your career, that does not mean you haven’t accomplished anything. You may have to dig a little deeper, but I guarantee this... **you DO have accomplishments.**
- Send the above questions to current/former co-workers, customers or clients and ask them to respond.
- Look at each of your jobs and ask yourself these questions: Why was I hired and how are things different because of me being there?
- Sift through your written performance reviews from current and prior employers and you may find hidden among the boiler plate comments reminders of things you did outside of your normal responsibilities.
- Every company has problems to solve and ever job has challenges to overcome. What challenges have you met and what problems have you solved?

**Empowering Reality:** Employers hire people who understand their problems and have the experience solving similar problems. Use the “CCAR” formula to tell your stories – on paper and in person - and prove your value.

If you don’t know how to do this, [hire someone who does.](#)



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## AH-HA! #4

### Your Résumé is Being “Read” and Evaluated By a Computer

In an age where nearly all important information is being captured, sorted, evaluated, and shared by computers, I am continually surprised that this AH-HA moment has eluded many jobseekers.

If you're thinking that your resume keeps falling in a black hole, you are partially correct. The infamous black hole goes by another name – ATS – an “Applicant Tracking System.”

If you have been submitting your résumé online or posting it on a job board, you can be 99.9% certain that an ATS is capturing, parsing, and storing it for later consideration. Unfortunately, with the way these systems work, 75% of candidates blow their chances of landing an interview as soon as they submit their résumé.



Image courtesy of Stuart Miles / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

- When submitting your résumé online, customize the content to align with a specific job and employer (re-read **AH-HA! #2.**)
- Integrate keywords from the job announcement; the job specific, transferrable and interpersonal skills that are included in the list of duties and requirements. These are the words that the ATS is programmed to scan. If they are not there, the résumé is rejected.
- Save and send your résumé in Plain Text format so the ATS can “read” and store the résumé without dropping critical information.

**Empowering Reality:** You can make your résumé “ATS-friendly” and steer clear of the black hole.

If you don't know how to do this, [hire someone who does.](#)

## AH-HA! #5

### You'll Land a Job More Quickly if You Spend Less Time Surfing Job Boards

You, and the majority of the people competing for jobs, are doing the following:

Click – search – apply – wait. Repeat daily, weekly and for hours on end.

If this is how you have been looking for work, how long was it before you noticed it wasn't working?

Go ahead and surf the internet to research industries, companies, issues, and trends. Use job boards to learn whose hiring, what skills and experience they are seeking, and submit QUALITY and CUSTOMIZED resumes and cover letters. You can even post your résumé on Monster if you like. But these are all passive and reactive approaches to landing a job. You feel safe - and when you do face rejection, it comes in the form of a canned email reply, or silence.

Having 20-30 search-related conversations each week is by far the most productive thing you can do to find opportunities, land interviews, and secure offers. These conversations should:



Image courtesy of David Castillo Dominici / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

- Begin with the people you know and branch out to a wider network.
- Share what you know and what you have to offer.
- Gather information about your target market.
- Gain access to people in a position to refer or hire you for a job.

To land a job more quickly, surf less – talk more.

**Empowering Reality:** The majority of employed people got there because of who they knew. You too can network your way to your next job.

If you don't know how to do this, hire [someone who can teach you](#).

A lot has changed in the job search arena with the advent of the Internet. Never before have job seekers had immediate access to millions of “experts” doling out information and advice on how to get a job. Yet, even with all of this so readily available — and millions of job openings posted on thousands of job boards on any given day — people are still struggling with finding and securing employment.

Sometimes it’s what you don’t know that hurts you most. And not knowing what you don’t know makes it nearly impossible to ask the right questions so you can get the answers you need.



If looking for work has left you feeling frustrated and immobilized and you’re beginning to question your value and ability to land a job, call or email me to schedule a one-hour [Get Unstuck Job Search Consultation](#). Together we will assess what is and is not working and pinpoint specific actions you can immediately put into practice.

I guarantee you at least one **AH-HA!** moment — or the session is free.



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