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Career Consultation

What Works Best – In Person or Long Distance?

By Craig B. Toedtman SPHR

Career advisors play a major role in helping clients launch a successful job search. Typically, assistance is presented in one of two forms (or a combination): face-to-face meetings between the client and the advisor OR through telephone and e-mail contact. There have been on-going discussions as to the effectiveness of both approaches – with the goal being to ensure that the "right" approach is used…and the specific needs of each client are met.

The primary objective for each advisor is to provide job search services for client by utilizing the budgeted hours in the most efficient and productive means possible. How do we balance face-to-face time, research, coaching and training time to ensure positive results?

The Interchange Institute (Dr. Anne Copeland, Brookline, MA) assessed the question in 2008 by conducting research to investigate whether either face-to-face or long-distance service yielded more positive results in securing jobs as well as in client satisfaction with the service.

The research approached the issues in three ways: statistical analysis of existing data, an Internet follow-up, and a telephone follow-up. Research indicated that the method of service delivery does not impact final results. Neither the success of securing employment nor client evaluation of services received significant superior acclaim. However, follow-up telephone surveys conducted produced new considerations.

Based upon surveys, the users (…got what they wanted and generally were very satisfied with all aspects of services they received," per Dr. Copeland's study. "Those who received face-to-face service reported more enthusiasm for the job search assistance and the differences it made in their lives," added Dr. Copeland. The number of participants was too low to be conclusive; however, results did reinforce the belief that when the budget permits, meet face to face

There are several validated conclusions:

- Both methods of delivery provide services that the clients rate with very high satisfaction;

White Paper Summary

- Face-to face or long distance – either way works!
- When in person, there is a more positive reinforcement and perception of involvement
- A combination of in-person and long distance is perhaps the best of both worlds.

- Receivers of face-to-face delivery reported more enthusiasm; however, length of contracted service is a variable requiring additional study. Perhaps the enthusiasm is the result of advisor/client relationship developing further because of the length of the service, additional coaching and training expended, and available practice time.

Certain clients understand the job search process and rely on their advisor for closely defined support, including resume production, contacts and more contacts. Conversely, others require significant training and support to assist them through the process. Advisors quickly assess each client's needs…and develop the service that is best suited for the individual – tailored to meet the specific needs, and delivered in the most efficient manner.

Regardless of the method, there is conclusive evidence that supports either type of delivery is effective - and a combination of the two could generate even more positive reviews. Efficient utilization of the advisor's time requires vigilant attention to details – quickly establishing rapport with the client while simultaneously helping her or him through the many phases of the job search process is the key to success.

Which service delivery produces the best results? The answer is obvious: it depends!

JobMetrx – your ticket to launch a successful job search that can be implemented quickly and efficiently. Our flexible services provide powerful tools that can be used to create and implement your personal campaign. We invite you to explore our services and pick the package that best suits your needs.

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